THIRD VOLUME

OF

ES

ON SEVERAL

Texts of Scripture;

AND

DISCOURSES

ON

the Ten Commandments.

The Lord's Day.

Moral and Pofitive Duties.

The Agapae or Love-Feafts.

The original Meaning of | The End of this World. Circumcifion and Baptism.

Schism and Heresy.

The Restoration of the Jews.

Two Parables.

By JOSEPH HALLETT, Jun.

LONDON,

Printed for J. NOON, at the White Hart near Mercers Chapel, in Cheapside. 1736.

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THE

PREFACE

ALL that I have occasion to say by may of Preface is, That some time after the Discourse on the Love-feasts of the ancient Christians was transcribed for the Press, I had the pleasure of seeing some of the same observations made by the very ingenious and learned Mr. Chandler in his Account of the conference in Nicholaslane. But as I have added some other remarks, I concluded to let my Essay stand as at first intended and drawn up. And though much has been writ-

iv The PREFACE.

ten of late on the subject of Heresy; yet as my thoughts happen to differ from what others have advanced on this head, I beg leave humbly to offer them to the world: and may they promote that truly catholic and charitable spirit which they are calculated and intended to beget and improve!

Exon, March, 29, 1736.

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NOTES

ON

TEXTS of SCRIPTURE.

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GENESIS, XXII. 14. And Abraham called the name of that place, Jehovab-jireb: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen. commentators are confiderably divided about the meaning of these last words. The occasion of which, seems to have been this; That they thought the last words of this text were to be translated: whereas, I humbly suppose, they must not be translated, but retained, as in the former part of the verse, thus: As it is said to this day, In the mount Jehovah-jireh. For thus the word ירארן fhould be pronounced in the latter, as well as in the former clause. The modern Jews have no authority to put different points in the two clauses. there any thing unreasonable in supposing, that Moses here cites only an imperfect sentence, or a piece of a sentence; In the mount

mount Jebovah-jireh: Since, upon fuch occasions, he uses to content himself with repeating only a part of a sentence; as Gen. x. 9. Nimrod was a mighty hunter before the Lord: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod, the mighty hunter before the Lord. Numb. XXI. 14. Wherefore it is said in the book of the wars of the Lord, what he did in the Red-sea, and in the brooks of Arnon. In like manner, in the other place, I do not suspect that Moses designed any thing more than this plain observation, that as Abraham gave the mount the name of Jehovah-jireh, so the mount retained, and was known by this name in the days of Moses; and that when men talk'd of that mount in his days, and of any thing done in it; they used to say, it was done in the mount Jehovah-jireh. Just as we say, Other things were done in mount Tabor, or in mount Hermon, &c.

Gen. XL. I. — Why do ye look one upon another? The present Hebrew text is, But the true reading is preferved in the Samaritan, למה תתיראו, Why are ye afraid? With this the Syriac

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agrees.

Josh. XXIV. 19. And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the Lord: for he is an holy God, &c. It has exceedingly puzzled all the criticks, to find the meaning of this expression, Ye cannot serve the Lord;

Lord; especially considering, that at this very time, Joshua was earnestly pressing them to ferve the Lord, and warning them of the danger of neglecting his tervice, ver. 14, 15, 19, 20. and engaged the people to enter into covenant to serve God, ver. 24, 25. Is it then possible, that in the midst of this discourse, Joshua should tell the people, that they could not ferve the Lord? I know what turns have been given to the expression by commentators: but none of them can afford me the least satisfaction. The truth is, the present reading of the Hebrew is wrong. The careless Jews have written תוכלו, inflead of כלה, from כלה. If we follow this latter reading, we must translate the words thus: Cease ye not to serve the Lord. I must own, I know of no authority for this reading in any of the ancient versions; which all agree with our tranflation. Yet I do not stick to propose an emendation of the text. This is a liberty that I cannot allow my felf, with regard to the New Testament; because the manufcript copies of that are much less corrupted, and, some of them, almost as old as the New Testament it self: Whereas the copies of the Old Testament are very modern; there being none in the world, now known, that is older than about the year of Christ six hundred: whereas the latest

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part of the text was written one thousand years, and the books of Moses two thoufand before this date of the oldest manuscript of the Bible, now known in the world. And however ancient the versions of the Old Testament, in the Polyglot, may be thought to be; it is certain fact, that some few errors crept into the copies of the Hebrew text, before the time in which the oldest of those versions was made; as appears from parallel accounts of the same facts, in different parts of the Old Testament. I have noted some such plain instances in my Second Volume, p. 43-47, 51, 59. On this account one may allow one's felf to correct a reading of the text of the Old Testament, without any warrant from manuscript or versions, provided there appears to be sufficient internal evidence of the corruption in the text it felf. This feems plainly to be the case in the passage before us. If we read it in the manner I conje-Eture it should be read, it removes insuperable difficulties, and makes the whole context of a piece. When the people had promised, ver. 18. We will serve the Lord: for be is our God. It was very natural for Joshua to add, Cease not to serve the Lord; for he is a holy God, he is a jealous God, he will not forgive. ___ If ye for sake the Lord, and serve strange gods, then will be turn and do you burt, &c. Ceasing to serve the

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TEXTS of SCRIPTURE.

the Lord, is the same as for saking the Lord. Joshua plainly meant, that as they promised, and began aright, he would have them continue and perform; fince otherwise a jealous God would feverely punish their apostasy. If any one needs to be convinced, that the word , is used in this fense, and in this construction, he may eafily fatisfy himself, by comparing Gen. xvIII. 33. xxVII. 30. Jugd. III. 18. Amos, VII. 2. 1 Kings, VII. 40. and many other

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2 Kings, XXIII. 16. - According to the word of the Lord, which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words. The careless Jews have here omitted a line or two, and, by that means, have render'd the passage very flat. We should read the whole, as the Greek version well does, thus: - according to the word of the Lord, which the man of God proclaimed, when Feroboham stood by the altar, at the feast. And [king Josiah] turning about, cast his eyes on the sepulchre of the man of God, who proclaimed these words. Then he said, What title is that that I see? And the men of the city told him, It is the sepulchre of the man of God, who came from Judah, and proclaimed these things, that thou hast done against the altar of Bethel. When the words that were omitted by the Hebrew transcribers are thus restored, the narra-

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tion appears handsome and exact. The nature of the thing concurs to shew, that this supply must be made, though all the other versions have follow'd the Hebrew

in omitting it.

There is another error of the Jewish scribes in the beginning of the same verse, who tell us, that Josiah spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount. The Greek version says, in the city: which is, no doubt, the true reading. For the sepulchre of the prophet, who came from Judah hither, to Bethel, was one of them, and his was in the city, as we read I Kings, XIII. 29, 30. And when it is said, in the next verse, after that now under consideration, that the men of the city told Josiah whose tomb it was, it is implied, that he was then, not on a mount out of town, but in the city.

Pfal. XXVIII. 8. The Lord is their strength. This sentence comes in very abruptly in the present Hebrew copies; for the Psalmist had before been speaking of himself. After which, it is not natural immediately to add, The Lord is their strength, when he had not in the least hinted who these persons were whose strength the Lord is. The true reading of the place is, that which is retained in the Greek, Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Aethiopic versions; where it runs thus: The Lord is the strength

TEXTS of SCRIPTURE. 7
of his people. Instead of אלמו , we should read

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Pfal. xciv. 10, 11.—He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know? The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity. It cannot be supposed, that any good author would omit fuch words, as our translators have here supplied, viz. shall not be know? If this had been the Psalmist's meaning, we need not doubt, but he would have used the expression. this supply is not found in any one of the ancient versions in the Polyglot, there is no reason to suppose, that it was ever used by David: Nor, indeed, is there any need of this supply. The construction is good, and the sense complete without it, if, neglecting the modern division of the verses, we render the place thus: The Lord, that teacheth man knowledge, knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity: or, if you would infift on a more strict translation, it may be this: He that teacheth man knowledge, even the Lord, knoweth, &c.

Isaiab, LXIV. 5. Thou meetest him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteousness, those
that remember thee in thy ways: behold thou
art wrath; for we have sinned: in those is
continuance, and we shall be saved. There
is something very obviously surprizing in
the latter part of this passage; which seems
to imply, that wicked Men should obtain

B 4

the falvation here meant, though they should continue in their sins. But we are directed to a truer reading of this passage by the old Greek and Arabic versions of it; which did not read ינושן, and we shall be faved, but yer, and we do wickedly. The Greek is em havnonuer. And then the beginning of the next verse must be render'd, not But; but (according to the most usual sense of the prefix, Vau) And we are all as an unclean thing. Farther; we should מבהם עולם as ftanding by themselves, and signifying what it is not possible they should signify, In those is continuance; but should join these words to המוח, we have finned, immediately preceding, and render the expression thus: We have always transgressed them, i. e. thy ways before mention'd. That המה המה may fignify, to transgress them, is evident from Gen. XLII. 22. Numb. XXI. 7. Ezra, x.2. Ifa.1.2. xxxv.5. xL111.27. Lxv1.24. And that may be construed as an adverb, and fignify, always, will certainly appear from Pfal. xLv. 6. xLvIII. 14. 111. 10. LXXXIX. 1, 2. CIV. 5. It may be farther observed, that the Greek and Arabic translators, read the beginning of this verse differently from the present Hebrew text, thus: Mercy shall meet them that do righteousness. Instead of www, bim that rejoiceth, I suppose they read you; which

which is render'd exeos, mercy, by the Greek translator of this same prophecy, Chap. XLV. 8. and which usually fignifies salvation, or deliverance. This word, mercy, I own, is omitted in the copy of the Greek publish'd by Walton; but this, or some other fuch word, is there plainly wanting; and it is well supplied by Dr. Grabe, in his edition, upon the strength of probable arguments, which may be supposed to be particularly from the authority of the Arabic version, which retains it, and which appears to have been made from the Greek. But it is not easy now to fix the true reading of the Hebrew throughout this verse: that which seems to be the most probable defign of it is this, viz. For mercy bath met them that do righteousness; and they will remember thy ways: behold thou art wrath; for we have transgressed them continually, we do wickedly, and we are all as an unclean thing, &c.

Jerem. vII. 21, 22, 23. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh: for I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them, in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings, or sacrifices: but this thing commanded I them, Jaying, Obey my voice, &c. Every one that hath read this passage with thought and observation, must

have

have been sensible of considerable difficulties in finding out the full meaning of it. What can be the meaning of, eat flesh, in this place? How shall we make out the connection, and account for the use of the word, for: Eat flesh; for I spake not concerning sacrifices, but said, Obey my voice? Why should God's not speaking concerning facrifices, be affigned as a reason for their eating any flesh, or the flesh of sacrifices in particular? How could it be said, that, in the day when God brought the Israelites out of Egypt, he did not speak concerning burnt-offerings and facrifices? It is certain, that at that time, the Israelites thought, and talk'd of offering burntofferings and sacrifices to God; and expected, that, as soon as they should come into the wilderness, God would direct them what creatures they should offer in facrifice to him, Exod. x. 25, 26. And which is more, God bimself expresly order'd the Israelites to ask of Pharaoh the liberty to go three days journey into the wilderness, that they might sacrifice to God, Chap. 111.8. v. 3. The very same day that the Israelites came out of Egypt, God twice gave them commandments concerning the facrifice of the passover, together with many positive rites relating to it; once just before they march'd, Exod. XII. 17, 28, 31. and again, just after they were got away from Pha-

TEXTS of SCRIPTURE. 11 Pharaoh, Ch. XIII. 3, 4, 5, &c. and on that very same day, God expresly gave commandment concerning other facrifices, viz. fuch as were to be offer'd in the room of their first born children and beasts, ver. 4, 13, 15. And why should his saying, Obey my voice, be represented as not including any command concerning burntofferings and sacrifices, when God really gave commandments concerning these; and without offering them, the Israelites could not obey his voice, and walk in all the ways that he had commanded them. It is reasonable from all this, to conclude, that the fense of this text has, hitherto, been miitaken, and the facrifices here spoken of, were not facrifices of a divine appointment, but fuch as the I/raelites wickedly offer'd to the Heathen idols, mention'd ver. 18. We may take the meaning of the context thus: " The Israelites sacrifice to the " queen of heaven, and pour out drink-" offerings to other gods. Therefore (faith " the Lord) my fury shall be poured out " upon this place. Thus faith the God " of Israel (as the words are represented " in the old Syriac version) They have " added their burnt-offerings to their fa-" crifices, and have eaten of the flesh, of " which I spake nothing to their fathers. " For in the day that I brought them out

of the land of Egypt, I gave them no

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" commandment concerning the [fore-" mentioned idolatrous] burnt - offerings " and facrifices: but this thing command-" ed I them, faying, Obey my voice, ---" and walk ye in all the ways that I have " commanded you: -- but they hear-" ken'd not, nor inclined their ear; but " walked in the counsels, and the imagi-" nation of their evil heart, -they have " fet their abominations in the house " which is called by my name, to pollute " it, and have burned their fons and " their daughters in the fire, which I com-" manded them not; neither came it into " my heart," ver. 18-31. This last passage well explains ver. 21, 22. as they are represented in the Syriac version. Here we are fold, they burnt their children in the fire to the idols: there we read, that they added idolatrous burnt-offerings to the facrifices that were of another kind. They did also eat of the flesh of these idolatrous facrifices, which God never commanded them to eat: which is exactly like his faying of their burning their children, which I commanded them not. According to this reading and interpretation, the 22d and 23d verses confirm what was said immediately before. For when God brought them out of Egypt, he did not command them to facrifice to the queen of heaven, or to burn-their children as victims to the Heathen

then idols: But he commanded them to facrifice to bimself, to obey bis voice, and to walk in all the ways that he commanded. Accordingly we read, that just after the Israelites were passed over the Red-sea, God charged them diligently to hearken to his voice, to do that which is right in his fight, to give ear to his commandments, and to keep all his statutes, Exod. xv. 26. This expression, all bis statutes and commandments, includes not only fuch as are of a moral nature, but those also that are positive, such as those particularly that relate to burnt-offerings and sacrifices of divine institution, about gathering manna, &c. Chap. xv. 28.

That the burnt-offerings and facrifices, mention'd ver 21. were fuch as the I/raelites offer'd to idols, is farther proved from hence, that their doing this is fet in opposition to their obeying God's voice, and to their walking in the ways that he had commanded them, and that their offering these sacrifices is said to be walking in the counsels, and in the imagination of their own evil heart. In this way of reading and interpreting the text, all is easy, natural, and confistent. There does not appear to be the least occasion for the mentioning facrifices of a divine appointment in this discourse, from ver. 17, to ver. 31. which relates to the idolatrous sacrifices that were

offer'd

days of the prophet.

I shall only add, that the copies of the prophet have been long corrupted in this place, even before the Greek version was made. Yet it is certain fact, that there are many others thus ancient. And, perhaps, the Syriac version of this passage, is not as perfect as could be wish'd: I suspect we should read, ver. 22. I gave them no commandment concerning their burnt-offerings and sacrifices. And yet he gave commandment concerning his own. The word, their (or your, in the Hebrew) is retained, ver. 21. and is thus emphatical; signifying such sacrifices as they themselves had instituted without any warrant from God.

 TEXTS of SCRIPTURE. 15

Latin is, In abscondito cubiculi sui. The Greek reads, Εν τω κοιθωνι τω κρυπθω αυθων, with which the Syriac and Arabic perfectly agree. And the Chaldee reads, τως καθεί το the rest of the verse.

Ezek. xx. 36. - I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt. It is exceedingly evident from the text it self, that some error has crept into the Hebrew copies of it. The wilderness here spoken of, is undoubtedly the wilderness in which the Israelites sojourned forty years, before they enter'd into Canaan. But it can never be supposed, that the prophet would call this, The wilderness of the land of Egypt. It was no more the wilderness of Egypt, than it was the wilderness of America. Accordingly the scriprure always distinguishes this wilderness from the land of Egypt, and speaks of the Israelites as being quite got out of Egypt, as foon as they arrived in the wilderness, Numb. xx11. 5. Exod. xx111. 15. xv1. 3. Nay, in this very chapter, Ezekiel himself, or rather God, by him, expresly distinguishes the wilderness from Egypt, ver. 10. I caused them (saith God) to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness. Is it possible then to be supposed, that a few verses after, the same writer would call this wilderness, The wilderness

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derness of Egypt? The passage is most certainly curtail'd by the wretched carelessness of the Jewish transcribers, who have omitted the words בהוצ יאם. The true, original reading, is preserv'd in the Greek of the Alexandrian manuscript; and in the Arabic version, which read thus: I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness, when I brought them out of the land of

Egypt.

Ezek. xx. 39. As for you, O house of Israel, thus faith the Lord God; Go ye, ferve ye every one bis idols, and bereafter also, if ye will not hearken unto me : but pollute ye my boly name no more with your gifts, and with your idols. Some part of this verse feems not capable of a good fense, and another part not very capable of any. Those words, Go ye, serve ye every one his idols, might, in some places, be well enough spoken and interpreted in an ironical sense. But there is no room to suppose, that an irony was intended in this place. The perfons to whom God here speaks, are such as are expresly distinguish'd from rebels, and sinners, ver. 38, 39. I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: - they shall not enter into the land of Israel, and ye shall know, that I am the Lord. As for you, O house of Israel, &c. When God had thus distinguished them from transgressors, and declared

XIX. 3.

clared that transgressors should not enter into the land, and hereupon turns and speaks to such as were enter'd into the land, and separated from sinners; can it be thought, that even in an ironical way, God should say to them; Go, serve your idols? It is not easy to find any meaning at all in the next clause. But if we read the verse as it was read in the old Hebrew copies, from which the Greek and Arabic versions were made, all will be accurate, just, and easy; thus: " As for you, O " house of Israel, thus saith the Lord "God, Let every one of you cast away " his doings [rather idols.] And after-" ward, if ye will hear me, ye shall no " more pollute my holy name with your " gifts, and with your doings [or idols."] The Greek, indeed, here reads doings, instead of idols; but herein the Greek tranflator may well be supposed to have been in the wrong. Instead of , he read מעללים, as the same translator also, Chap. xiv. 7. xvi. 36. xx. 16, 24. xxii. 3, 4. either changed, or plainly misunderstood the word. The Greek translator therefore should have said; Let every one of you cast away his idols: for egapale must be render'd (not Afferte, as it is in the Latin translation of the Seventy in the Polyglot, but) Cast away, as the same word fignifies, Deut. xvII. 7. 2 Kings, xxIII. 24. 2 Chron.

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XIX. 3. and other places. And if it was possible for any one to doubt whether sgapale comes from egaips; he would be immediately convinced by turning to Isaiah,

LXII. 10. Ezek. XLV. 9.

Ezek. XXVII. II. - The Gammadims were in thy towers.—Learned men have been greatly at a lofs, and much divided in their opinions about the Gammadims; some thinking them to be Cappadocians, others Phonicians, &c. But the truth is, this is not the name of any nation at all. The Jewish transcribers have mispelt the word. For שמרים, we should read שמרים, as the word was rightly spelt in the more correct Hebrew copies, from which the Greek, Syriac, and Arabic versions were made. Accordingly the passage should be render'd thus: The men of Arvad, with thine army upon thy walls round about, were the guards in thy towers. One would the rather depend upon this emendation of the text, because the reading of the Greek is not only found in the Arabic, which was made from it, but also in the Syriac, which does not here follow the Greek, but was, in this place, made directly from the Hebrew text. See ver. 16.

Amos, 11. 7. That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor. This expression is very unintelligible; and no wonder, fince the Jewish transcribers of

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TEXTS of SCRIPTURE. the Hebrew text have omitted one word, and our translators mistaken the sense of another. The old versions direct us to the true reading, and sense of the place. The Greek has it thus: - They fell the righteous for filver, and the needy for a pair of shoes that tread upon the dust of the earth: and they smite with their fifts on the head of the poor, &c. See Grabe's edition. The Syriac pretty exactly agrees herewith. The Arabic differs a little, expressing it thus: They sell the needy, walking upon the dust of the earth, for Shoes (reading in the Greek, from whence this translation was made, neither Ta malesla, as in the Roman and Alexandrian copies, nor των παθενίων, as in Grabe's text from the copy of the prophets in the king's library, from one of Barbarini's, and another among Laud's manuscripts at Oxford, but Tov malesla, agreeing with memla) they beat with sticks the heads of the poor. But, perhaps the Greek, as represented in Grabe's text, is the most accurate. The word new, here render'd by malew, is render'd to the same fense, Psal. Lv1. 1, 2. Lv11. 3. Then we must add some word that signifies, to beat with the fift. Now, as ATIN fignifies the fift, we may well suppose, that אָן did signify, to smite with the fift : and then, after par, we must add 15711, or rather, to make it

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the better agree with על מכרם, ver. 6. we should here read, וגרפה בראש דלים.

Matt. vi. 10. Thy kingdom come. - That the Lord's Prayer is, in it felf, a most unexceptionable, and most excellent prayer, is beyond all question, with those who believe it to be, as every Christian does, a prayer composed, and dictated by the Son of God himself. There can be no doubt, but that it was the very best prayer, that could be given for the use of those, for whom our bleffed Saviour intended it. As it proceeded from him, it is incumbent on us to labour to understand it in the most exact manner we can. Every expression in it was exceeding easy, and the meaning of it very obvious to them to whom it was first deliver'd. But there is reason to question, whether Christians now take every petition of it in the same sense in which it was originally meant. Particularly, there is reason to apprehend, that the petition, Thy kingdom come, has been somewhat misinterpreted in later ages. The original meaning of this expression may be certainly known by means of comparing it with the parallel expressions of the gospels. This same kingdom of God is often spoken of in other places. In the beginning of Christ's ministry, he taught, that the kingdom of God was at band, and drawing near.

TEXTS of SCRIPTURE. 21

Matt. x.7. Christ said to his apostles, when he first fent them out, As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of beaven is at hand; expressed thus: Luke, x. 9, 11. The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. This kingdom of God was not Jet up during our Saviour's life time. A few days before his death, he still said, The kingdom of God was nigh at band, Luke, xx1. 31. And he limited the time for its coming within the lives of some of his disciples, Luke, IX. 27. There be some standing here, who shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God, or till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom, Matt. xv1. 28. What this kingdom of God, set up under the Messia, is, we plainly learn from what our Saviour fays about it, Luke, XIX. 11, &c. He Spake a parable, because he was nigh to ferusalem, and because they thought, that the kingdom of God should immediately appear: He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. By this parable our Saviour plainly means, that he was to go up into beaven, to receive his kingdom. Accordingly we find, that when our Saviour was risen from the dead, he said, All authority is given me in beaven and in earth. Then he actually received his kingdom from his father: and then the kingdom of God was come. For the com-C 3 ing

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ing of this kingdom, without all doubt, our Saviour taught his disciples to pray: His meaning was, that they should beg of God to advance the Messia to the kingdom which was promised him, and make him king over the Heathen nations, as well as

over the Jews.

From hence it appears, that our Saviour did not intend that his disciples should use this form of prayer in all ages of the This particular petition was church. very fit to be used in the beginning of the gospel, when the kingdom of God was not yet come, and was only at band. But immediately upon Christ's resurrection, and receiving the kingdom, it was no longer proper to pray in this sense, Thy kingdom come: for then the kingdom of God here meant, was actually come. Christians therefore cannot think themselves bound in conscience to use the Lord's Prayer in their devotions: fince it appears, that it was not composed for the use of any that lived fince Christ's receiving the kingdom. But if any Christians will use this prayer, they must mean, by Thy kingdom come, a different thing from what Christ intended by it. They must mean, that God's kingdom under the Messiah, may be more and more inlarged, and that more nations may be brought to the knowledge, and more men brought to the obedience of the gospel of Christ. TEXTS of SCRIPTURE. 23. Christ. In this sense we may still use the petition. But in the original sense of it, we cannot use it without gross trisling.

It farther appears, that the Lord's Prayer was not intended to be a form of prayer to be used in all ages of the church; because there is in it no direction to pray in the name of Christ. Before Christ became a facrifice for us, there was no occasion, and no commandment to pray in his name: accordingly our Saviour fays, John, XVI. 24. Hitherto have ye ask'd nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. Heretofore in the prayer which he taught them, he had not directed them to ask in bis But now he tells them, that, after bis resurrection, they should ask in bis name, ver. 22, 23. From hence it obvioully follows, that Christ did not intend his prayer to be used as a form by Christians after his resurrection: because he does not therein direct us to pray in bis name: in which manner we must now always pray. And if Christians will now use this prayer; they ought, according to this rule of our Saviour, to add at the conclusion of it, to this purpose, All these things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

But though we are not bound to use this whole form when we pray, since one petition is already fulfilled, and therefore

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no more to be offer'd in its original sense; yet the rest of the petitions are evidently such as we may always offer to God: and therefore we may use any, or all of them, as often as we pray; just as we may use any other expression of scripture, that suits

our case, in prayer.

Matt. vII. 13, 14. Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction; and many there be who go in thereat. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way. which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. It has been well observed by commentators on this text, that herein our Saviour compares the Christian life to a man's walking in a narrow, rough way; and to his entring in at a strait gate, into which he cannot pass without difficulty: while he compares a way of wickedness to a broad path, in which a man may walk with ease and pleasure. The reason of Christ's comparing the Christian life to a man's walking in a narrow way, affign'd by commentators, is, because a man is bedged in, as it were, on both fides by the commandments of God, and is forbidden to turn either to the right or to the left; because virtue lies in the middle, between two extremes; and the Christian is obliged to keep in this narrow middle path, while wicked men wander as much as they pleafe from

TEXTS of SCRIPTURE. 25 from it, either to the right, into the excesses, or to the left, into the defects of virtue, and so have a large path to walk in. Some of the commentators add, that the path of virtue is the more fitly compared to a narrow and rough way, because of the temptations to fin, and the evil appetites of the flesh, which it will cost a man pains to overcome. Upon observing this interpretation given of the text, it is natural to inquire, how it is confistent with those other places of scripture, which represent the way of virtue, as abundantly more pleasant than the ways of fin? The wife man says; The ways of wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and all ber paths are peace, Prov. 111. 17. Christ says, that his yoke is easy, and his burden light, Matt. XI. 30. And St. John says, that God's commandments are not grievous, I John v. 3. How are these passages to be reconciled with Christ's saying, Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leads to life? Dr. Whithy answers; "This way is only " rough and grievous at our first entrance into it, when we have many old ac-" quaintance, and seeming friends to part " with, and evil habits to put off, and " till faith and patience have smooth'd it to us." But that our Saviour's words are not to be interpreted in this manner, is demonstrable from hence, viz. that he does

does not fpeak of the beginning of the way only, but of the way in general, that it is narrow: which, one would think, should imply, that it is narrow all along, from the beginning to the end of it. Nay more; our Saviour here directly represents the very last end of all the way to be as narrow as the beginning of it, when he speaks of the strait gate. For this strait gate is at the end of the whole path: so that when a man is arrived at this gate, he has no more way to travel over; but only passes through the gate, and then is enter'd into heaven, and receives his reward of rest and glory. There feems therefore fufficient reason to think, that our Saviour, in this place, had an eye to the persecutions, with which he knew the profession of his religion would be attended; and that when he fays, the gate is strait, and the way is narrow and troublesome, he means, that it would be difficult for men to receive, and adhere to the Christian religion; because their doing so would expose them to the batred both of the Jews and Gentiles, and would pull heavy loads of persecution on. them. And a way may be very fitly represented as narrow, thorny, dangerous, and difficult to be passed, when he that will pass it, must go through fire and water, and rest his weary limbs in prisons and dungeons, the only houses upon the road.

TEXTS of SCRIPTURE. 27 In this view of our Savour's words, it is easy to see, how fitly he speaks of the gate of life as strait. For the evils of persecution use to follow men as far as the very gate of heaven. When a Christian is put to death by persecutors for his adhering to the faith and practice of the gospel, the evils of life reach to the very end of his journey, and leave him not till he is got within the gate, into heaven it felf. On the other hand, when the scripture fays, that wisdom's ways are pleasantness and peace; that God's commandments are not grievous, and that Godliness is profitable to all things, baving promise of the life that now is; the meaning plainly is, that virtue and piety have a natural tendency to promote men's peace and happiness in this life, at all times, excepting only in a time of persecution: in which particular time, the way is narrow and rough, and the gate to life is strait; so that a man must, through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God. In like manner, when Christ speaks of his yoke as easy, and his burden as light, he means, that excepting in a state of persecution, the practice of virtue, which he has required in the gospel, is more easy, pleasant, and agreeable, than the practice of fin; and that the positive commands he has given, are more easy, than the pofitive commands of the Jewish religion:

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while still in a state of persecution, it would be no easy matter to bear the load of sufferings, and the tormenting death which the persecutors would inflict; whereby the way to heaven would be made rough, and thorny, even to the end: whereas, in all other cases, the way grows easier and smoother by degrees: So that it seems plain, Christ here speaks of no other state but that of persecution, and means, that the way of unbelief, which was not perfecuted, was broad and pleafant, and that many, the majority, walk'd therein: while the way of Christianty; which was feverely perfecuted, was render'd troublefome and difficult; and therefore few would have courage to walk in it. This faying is therefore parallel to what we read, Mark, x. 23, 25. How hardly shall they that have riches, enter into the kingdom of God! - It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. That our Saviour here means, this would be difficult on the account of the persecutions that would be rais'd against the gospel, is manifest from the occasion of his faying these things: the occasion was, his directing a rich man to fell what he had, and to take up his cross, ver. 21. who hereupon left Jesus, and would not consent to be his disciple, ver. 22. The way was dif-

TEXTS of SCRIPTURE. 29

difficult to him, because he could not bear to be persecuted, and to part with all for

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Luke, XXIII. 34. Then Said Jesus, Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do. They, who crucified our Saviour, did not know that they were crucifying the Messia, the Son of God: in this fense they did not know what they were doing: for they did not look upon him under these characters. This their not knowing him to be the Son of God, prevented their fin in crucifying him, from being unpardonable. If they had really believed him to be the Messiah, and the Son of God, and yet with this persuasion full in their minds. had persecuted him for calling himself the Son of God, and had crucified him on this account: in this case their an would, in all likelihood, have been too great to be forgiven; nor could they ever have hoped for mercy: and in that case, Christ would not have pray'd God to forgive them. But fince they had not finned thus unpardonably, and were capable of forgiveness, upon the account of their not knowing him to be the Christ; he pleads this their ignorance, as a reason why he pray'd for their forgiveness, and why God might pardon them in perfect confistence with his boliness and wisdom.

John, IV. 24. God is a Spirit, and they that worship bim, must worship bim in spirit and in truth. It is here first to be obferved, that the Samaritans, to whom our Saviour had a view, when he spoke these words, seem to have practised that kind of idolatry, which confifts in worshiping images of God, home to our Saviour's days; when they were first transplanted into Samaria, in the room of the ten tribes of Ifrael, they undoubtedly worshiped false gods; as we read 2 Kings, xvII. 25-32. which two last verses have been sadly abused by careless transcribers, fo as to express a direct contradiction. The true reading, preserved in the old Syriac and Arabic versions, is this: They (that is, the Samaritans) fear'd the Lord, and served their own gods, after the manner of the Gentiles. Thus the Israelites were carried away out of their own land, unto this day; because they for sook the Lord, and served not the Lord; neither did according to the covenant, ordinance, law, and commandment, which the Lord commanded the children of Jacob. The Samaritans, at first, were gross idolaters, in the worst sense, worshiping only false gods. But after a Jewish priest had been among them, and instructed them, they worshiped the God of Israel, together with their idols. But at the same time the scripture tells

TEXTS of SCRIPTURE. us, they worshiped him as the God of the land, i. e. as one of the same class with their idols, and not as the one most bigh God. After this, many of the Jews revolted to the Samaritans, and mingled with them in marriages, as Josephus relates, lib. x1. cap. 8. At the same time a temple was erected on mount Gerizim, in Samaria, in opposition to the temple at Jerusalem; when the Samaritans and apostate Jews retained some of the Jewish rites and customs among them. But still it does not appear to me, that they did cast off their old idolatry. The learned Mr. Joseph Mede indeed says, that, at this time, the Samaritans were brought to cast off their false gods, and to worship the God of Israel only, Disc. XII. Patrick, Prideaux, and Walton, say the same. Nay, this last saith, that every one affirms it, Proleg. XI. feet. 6. But after all the searches I can make, I cannot find any authority to support this opinion. Josephus hints no fuch thing. Nay, he relates what feems to be utterly inconfistent with it, viz. That the Samaritans said in a letter to Antiochus Epiphanes, long after the building of the Samaritan temple, that their temple was anonymous, i. e. not dedicated to any God by name; and defired, that, for the future, it might be called, The temple of Jupiter, lib. XII. cap. 5. al. 7. p. 534. edit.

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Hudson. This temple was, at first, while anonymous, like the altar to the unknown God, at Athens, Acts, xvII. 23. at which time, no doubt, idols were worshiped in it, as well as the God of Israel: else it would certainly have had a name, and been called his temple. Afterward, without all question, it was used to idolatrous purposes, when it was called, The temple of Jupiter. This was about one hundred and seventy years before Christ: so that it is most natural to suppose, that the Samaritans continued to worship idols, and the God of Israel, as no other than a God of a particular country, home to our Saviour's

days.

From this account of matters, it will be eafy to explain our Saviour's discourse with the woman of Samaria, John, IV. 19-24. Her head was full of the great controversy, then subsisting between the Jews and Samaritans, about the place of worship, whether it was Jerusalem, or mount Gerizim, in Samaria? She therefore put the question to our Saviour. To the question he gave a direct answer, ver. 21. The bour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father, i.e. The worship of God should not be confined to either of those places; but be perform'd in any place, all the world over. Here Christ ends his answer to the woman's question.

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question. In the next words he proceeds to an intirely new subject; wherein the woman needed, though she did not ask, to be fet right, viz. the object and manner of worship. The object is God the Father: and the manner of worshiping him is in spirit and in truth, ver. 23, 24. In this part of the discourse, our Saviour condemn'd the Samaritans for wor-Thiping they knew not what: who, according to their own account, beforementioned, worshiped a god, whose name they were ignorant of, and also the Heathen idol, Jupiter. Whereas, the Jews knew what they worshiped, even the One true God, and him Alone. And (fays our Saviour) the time is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall (among the Samaritans and Gentiles, as they have already done among the Jews) worship the Father as a Spirit should be worshiped, with their spirit, (Rom. 1.9.) and in truth, or with fincerity, (see the phrase thus used, Matt. xx11. 16. 1 Cor. v. 8. 2 Cor. v11. 14. i John, 111. 18. 2 John, 1. 3 John, 1.) From whence we may observe, how grosly they have mistaken our Saviour's meaning, who have thought, that he condemn'd the Jewish worship of sacrifices. For in that kind of worship good men worshiped him, as the immutable law of nature requires all to do, as a Spirit, with all the powers powers of their spirits, and with truth, and

fincerity of beart.

John, XI. 25, 26. Jefus faid unto ber, I am the resurrection, and the life: be that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall be live; and whosever liveth and believeth in me, chall never die. This last clause has seem'd, to many, to be very strange and surprizing; as if it signified, that Christ promised to exempt believers from ever dying at all. To avoid this difficulty, some have contended, that the words should be render'd, shall not die for ever. But there is no foundation for this criticism; since it was the manner of the Hebrews, in their language, to express a negative in the way as our Saviour here does. Those words, in Hebrew, He shall not die for ever, would, unque stionably fignify, he shall never die. See Matt. XXI. 19. Mark, 111. 29. XI. 14 John, Iv. 14. Thus the Jews understood our Saviour's language, John, VIII. 51,52 x. 28. We may therefore allow our tranflation to be just. When our Saviour fays, that the believer shall never die, he confiders, and speaks of the believer as risen from the dead; after which, it is very true, that he shall never die any more Christ first mentions the believer's dying though he were dead: next he mentions his resurrection, yet shall be live: then he confider

TEXTS of SCRIPTURE. 35

fiders him as alive at the refurrection; Whosoever liveth [the life immediately be-fore spoken of] shall never die: for he shall not be exposed to the fecond death. Our Saviour, with great accuracy, avoided faying only; Whosoever liveth at the resurrection, shall never die; because all the wicked shall be made alive at the general resurrection; and yet shall be condemn'd to the second death. Therefore Christ added the words, and believeth in me, meaning, Whosoever lives again at the refurrection, provided he be one of them that are believers in me, he shall never die any more; but shall injoy eternal life and bleffedness.

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Rom. v. 7. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. The true sense of this text, has been given by many learned men; such as Beza, Gataker, Crellius, Slichtingius, &c. who take notice, that the word here render'd, yet, is yae; which ought, without all question, to be render'd, for; and who have accordingly pointed the whole passage thus: Scarcely for a righteous man will one die. (For peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die:) But God commendeth bis love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. The principal thought is; Men would hardly care to die D 2 for for a righteous person: But Christ did more; he died for finners. The defign of the Parenthesis, is only to account for the apostle's using the word, scarcely. would not fay absolutely, that no one would die for a righteous man: but he fays, scarcely, because, perhaps, some one might venture to die for a righteous or good man. This interpretation of the passage, is so natural, and the word, yag, for, renders it so absolutely necessary, that it seems strange, it has not been more universally received. But others, paying too much regard to our English translation, reprefent the apostle as saying; " That though " a man would scarcely die for a righteou " person; yet he would not stick to die " for a good person." According to this way of interpreting the text, the apostle is made to fay, that though the instance of persons dying for a righteous man, an scarce, and uncommon, yet the instance of persons dying for a good man are no scarce, but frequent: which, to be sure, what the apostle never intended to say. No does there appear to be any just found tion for the distinction, which has been made between the two words, righteou and good; as if the former only fignified one strictly just, and the latter, a beneficen and liberal person. It is very true, the these are two very distinct characters; an tha

TEXTS of SCRIPTURE. 37 that the latter is much more worthy and noble than the other. But, it is as true on the other hand, that the words, righteous and good, are not used by the writers, either of the Old, or the New Testament, to fignify precisely, these distinct characters. Nay, so far from this, that a righteous man is described in scripture, as one that is beneficent and liberal. Gataker takes notice (in his Cinnus) of the Psalmist's saying, The righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth.—He (in Greek, the righteous) is ever merciful, and lendeth, Pfalm XXXVII 21, 20. This is the very character which the Psalmist gives of a good man, Psal. cx11. 5. A good man sheweth mercy, (the same word in the Hebrew, as before) and lendeth. In like manner Solomon fays; A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast, Prov. XII. 10. and, the righteous giveth and spareth not, Ch. xx1. 26. Gataker farther observes; that when Joseph is faid to be a just, or righteous man, Matt. 1. 19. the meaning is, that he was meek and merciful. Joseph being a just, or righteous man, and not willing to make his wife a publick example, was minded to put ber away privily. To this I add, that the righteous, mention'd by our Saviour, Matt. xxv. 37. were truly beneficent and liberal; such as gave meat to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, and clothes to the naked Chri-. D 3 stians,

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stians, who visited the Christians that were fick, or that were imprison'd for conscience-sake. And what can a man do more, to deserve the character of good? On the other hand, in the same chapter, Christ gives the title of good to one that had been merely just, ver. 21. Well done thou good and faithful servant. Thou hast been faithful over a few things: in which there was nothing of charity, or generofity, but merely justice. And Joseph of Arimathea, is called a good, and righteous man, Luke, xxIII. 50. where, no doubt, good, and righteous, fignify the same thing, even one that yields fincere and universal obedience to all the will of God. From these things it appears, that the scripture makes no manner of distinction between a righteous, and a good man; but uses these as synonymous terms: There can be no reason then to think, that St. Paul, in the text now under confideration, uses them in any other manner. So that the interpretation, now given of the text, seems to be establish'd beyond all contradiction.

James, 11. 2, 3, &c, If there come into your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, stand thou there, or, sit here

here under my footstool; are ye not then partial? &c. Some commentators, particularly Grotius, and Estius, are of opinion, that St. James, in this place, speaks of the order wherein the different ranks of Christians, (elders, young men, widows, virgins, &c.) were to fit in the church in the time of divine service, and of the neglect of this order among those Christians, to whom he writes. Others think he speaks of Christian confistories for judicature. All agree, that the rich and poor man, here mention'd, were Christians, and members of the church. Whereas, it is pretty plain, that they were unbelievers, whom curiofity drew into the Christian asfembly, to hear the publick preaching. If the unbeliever was a rich man, and well dressed, the Christians, to whom St. James writes, offer'd him a convenient place to fit, and hear the fermon, hoping that be would be brought over to Christianity, and be belpful to them by his riches. But if a poor unbeliever, in mean dress, came into the church; they would not offer any conve-

church; they would not offer any conveniency for fitting and hearing the fermon, but leave him to *stand* where he could, or fit in the meanest, and most *inconvenient* place. This was their *partiality*, that while they desired to *make proselytes* among the *rich* unbelievers, they did not feek to

proselyte the poor. Thus they despised the D 4 souls

fouls of the poor, merely because they were poor; and so were backward to afford them the means of salvation; while they fet a greater value on the fouls of the rich, only because they were rich; and so readily admitted them to partake of the means of grace. This interpretation excellently well agrees with the context; wherein St. James observes, that God has chosen the poor in this world, to become believers, and to be heirs of his eternal kingdom; and that the rich men among the unbelievers, did persecute the church, and blafpheme the name of Christ, ver. 5, 6, 7. They had then no reason to favour the rich unbelievers beyond the poor; but should take heed to incourage all men to come into their affembly, and to hear the fermon, and make their being there as eafy and commodious as possible; that so they might be attentive, and prevail'd upon to become Christians. They should not have the glorious faith of Christ mix'd with a respect to persons; but have an impartial regard to the fouls of all men, which are equally precious. St. James does not lose fight of this point, till the end of the chapter. As he exhorted them, ver. 1. not to have their faith mix'd with partiality; so, ver. 14, &c. he proceeds largely to shew, that it is unprofitable to have faith without good works.

James,

James, 11. 18. Yet a man may say, Thou bast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith by thy works; and I will shew thee my faith by my works. It is thought, by all commentators, that St. James speaks all this in his own person: whereas, it is evident, from the manner of his introducing this matter, that here, in the beginning of the verse, he speaks the sense of another, and advances an objection, in those words; Thou hast faith, and I have works. The words, ANN' spei Tis, here render'd, yet a man may say, are used by St. Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 35. and translated thus: But some man will say, i. e. some one will object. In like manner St. James must be understood as introducing an objection: for the words will not bear any other sense; " But some " one will object, or reply to me upon the " occasion of what I have said, Thou, " James, hast faith as well as I: and I " have works as well as thou"? St. James answers; " Hast thou works? Pray, what " fort of works are they? Shew me thy " faith by means of thy works; by means of that fort of works, of which thou " boastest: and I will shew thee my faith " by my works; which are fuch as really " flow from a fincere faith, and tend to " the honour of God: while the works " thou talkest of, are vastly imperfect, no better than the trembling of the Devils; " which

"which does not end in reformation and bedience", ver. 19. I have here followed those copies which read, by thy works; which are fix times more in number than the others: and some of them are copies of great worth. Indeed, the other reading, without thy works, is very ancient, as appears from its being adopted into the Alexandrian manuscripts, and the Latin, Syriae, and Coptic versions. But the text seems to have been alter'd, as Dr. Mills, and many other good critics, have thought, by such transcribers as did not understand the fense of the original reading, and went about to make the passage more intelligible.

1 Pet. v. 12. By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you (as I suppose) I have written briefly. Commentators are much divided with regard to the apostle's intention in using the words, as I suppose. Some refer them to the character of faithful, and apprehend the apostle meant, that he supposed Silvanus to be a faithful bro-But this is fuch a lessening of the character of a very good man, that I cannot imagine St. Peter would have fuggested it. Others would perfuade us his meaning is, that he supposed he had written briefly, and that his epiftle would feem short to them to whom it was directed. Grotius, not fatisfied with either of these interpretations, refers the words, I suppose,

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o, I have written by Silvanus. Grotius magines, that St. Peter here speaks, not of this epistle, but of some former epistle, now loft, which he had wrote to the same people; and fo would have the meaning to be, " I formerly wrote you a letter by " Silvanus, if I am not mistaken; I suppose I sent it by him; if I remember " right, he carried it." This interpretation would be natural enough, if the apoftle did here speak of a former epistle. But it is much more likely that he speaks of this same epistle, to which the three last verses may be consider'd as a postscript. It is common to fay, I have written, in the conclusion of the same letter, nay, and even in the body of it too; as, I Cor. v. 9, 11. 1x. 15. Gal. vi. 11. Philem. ver. 19, 21. 1 70hn, 11. 26. v. 13. In like manner St. Peter's meaning feems plainly to be, that he had now written this letter, he intended, I imagine, to fend it by Silvanus: but as he could not be fure, that Silvanus would carry it, (fince death might hinder him, or providence might suddenly call him another way, or some other accident might intervene) he said, I suppose. That the apostle's words will bear this sense, may be made appear from our own common forms of speaking. Let us put the case; That a gentleman should write the following sentence in the conclusion

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clusion of a letter, viz. " I wrote you a " letter lately by the carrier; but I per-" ceive it is miscarried: now I have writ-" ten by my own man, as I suppose." Those words, I have written by my own man, can only fignify, "This letter which " I have now written, I intend to fend by " my own man." And the adding the words, as I suppose, would be designed as a guard against speaking too positively of a future event; which is not in the power of man: for, the same reason as St. James directs us to fay, If the Lord will, and we shall live, we will do this or that. (For this is the true reading of James, IV. 15. as appears from the Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Aethiopic versions: though Dr. Mills has taken no notice of it.) With the like caution, St. Peter fays; " I have written by Silvanus, as I suppose, " i. e. The letter which I have now writ-" ten, will, I suppose, be sent by Silvanus.

2 John, ver. 6. And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, that as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it. The commentators are unanimously agreed, in saying that St. John here speaks of our love to God. Whereas a very learned friend has suggested to me, the following interpretation, which is more agreeable to the context, viz. "I write no new command-

TEXTS of SCRIPTURE. 45 mandment to you, but that which we

" had from the beginning of Christianity,

" that we love one another. And this is

" the effect and evidence of our love to

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one another, that we walk after God's

" commandments, viz. Do not steal, do " not kill, &c. This, viz. that we love

" one another, is the commandment, that " (as ye have heard from the beginning) " ye should walk in it, i. e. in love". To confirm this interpretation, I beg leave to refer the reader to what I take to be a parallel text, Rom. XIII. 8, 9, 10. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another, bath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou Shalt not kill, Thou Shalt not steal, Thou Shalt not bear false witness, Thou Shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprebended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. This is love then, that we walk after these commandments; Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, &c. The walking after these commandments, is the same thing as love to our neighbour. And, as St. John in the context, was speaking (not of love to God, but) of love to one another, ver. 5. it is most agreeable to inter-

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pret him as speaking of the same love to

one another, ver. 6.

Jude, ver. 12 .- Trees, whose fruit wi. thereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots. These characters are first to be interpreted in the literal sense, as characters of trees, and afterward we are to feek for the application intended by the author. In the literal fense, as I understand it, there is a just and nice gradation. (1.) The trees here spoken of, bear some fruit, but then it foon withereth, and is good for nothing. (2.) The trees become worse, and bear no fruit at all. (3.) The trees still grow worse, and are twice dead, i.e. they continue dead for two seasons, or two years. (4.) Hereupon the trees are pluck'd up by the roots, and cut up for fuel. The first season of their not bearing fruit, and feeming to be dead, the owner of the trees did not think fit to root them up. Still he would entertain some hope, that they would revive, and bear fruit the next year. But when he sees them fruitless and dead, a second summer, he despairs of their reviving, and therefore plucks them up by the roots, in order to burn them. I cannot be certain, that, twice dead, fignifies dead two years: I propose it as a conjecture. If it be the truth, it very well agrees with the context: and the whole character is eafily applied to the feducers,

ducers, aim'd at by St. Jude. They first brought forth fruits of faith and righte-ousness; but this fruit soon wither'd, and they grew profane and impure: then they were without any fruits of righteousness; in this state they continued time after time, so as to be quite dead, as to all goodness and virtue: therefore, since there was no hope of their reformation, God determin'd to cut them off, and destroy them.

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DISCOURSES

DISCOURSE I. An Exposition of the Ten Commandments.

The FIRST Commandment.

Exod. xx. 3. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

Aving in a former Discourse, in the first volume, shew'd to whom these Ten commandments were given, and hinted at the true method of interpreting them; I beg leave now to lay before the reader what appears to me to be their true and original meaning; which I cannot help thinking, many learned men have missaken.

The first of these commandments has no great difficulty in it. It plainly forbids

the owning and worshiping any more spirits, or beings, than one, as infinite and Supreme; and moreover prohibits the worship of the Heathen deities, which set themselves up as rivals of the one true God. It forbids the having more ultimate objects of worship The Jewish worshipers of Baal than one. finned against this command: seeing they did not so much as pretend, that Baal was a subordinate minister of the one true God; but worshiped him as God's rival, and, at the same time, for sook the God of Israel, and fet afide bis worship, as we read, Judges, 11. 13. 1 Kings, xv111.21. 2 Kings, x. 23. Jerem. 11. 8. This is a fin against the light of nature, and consequently inexcusable in any man whomsoever, as the apostle has expresly taught, and clearly prov'd, Rom. 1. 19, 20, 25. That which may be known of God, is manifest among the Gentiles: for God hath shewed it unto them (For the invisible things of him, even his eternal Power and Godhead, ever fince the creation of the world, are, when attended to, clearly seen by the things that are made) that they might be inexcusable who changed the truth of God into a lie, (i. e. set aside the true God, and fet up false Gods in his stead) and worshiped and served the creature to the neglect of the Creator. From which passage of the apostle, we learn, that God has prohibited this gross idolatry

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to Christians, as a most inexcusable sin, both by the light of nature, and by the gospel. The same sin is also forbidden and condemned, Asts, xiv. 11—15. Turn from these vanities [Jupiter and Mercury, and their worship] unto the living God, I Thess. 1.9, 10. and in many other places of the New Testament. I shall only add; that, according to the first commandment, the one God is one single person. For the word, ME, cannot possibly signify more persons than one.

The SECOND Commandment.

Exod. xx. 4, 5, 6. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thy self to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

Before I enter upon an explication of this command, it will be needful to confider, whether this is a fecond command, or only a part of the first. That the whole num-

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the TEN COMMANDMENTS. 51 ber of these commands is ten, is expresly afferted by Moses, Exod. xxxiv. 28. Deut. iv. 13. and is accordingly acknowledged on all hands. So that if what we Protestants call the first and second commands are but part of the first, the tenth must be divided into two. But if the Papists are wrong in dividing the tenth into two, we are right in representing the prohibition of images, as the second commandment.

Clement of Alexandria seems to have join'd the two first commandments into one: He says, (Strom. vi. p. 682. Paris 1641.) " The first commandment teaches " us, that there is one almighty God, " who brought the people out of Egypt, " and to abstain from idolatry. The fe-" cond shews us, that we ought not to " take God's - name in vain. - The " third teaches us, —that God hath gi-" ven us a seventh day for rest," &c. But when he has finish'd what he thought fit to fay about the fabbath, he adds, p. 687. " The fifth treats of honouring our father and mother. The tenth command-" ment treats of all evil defires." account is so very confus'd, that nothing can be built upon it. He calls no command by the name of the fourth, but strangely leaps from three to five. From his calling the precept about the fabbath, the third, and that about honouring pa-

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rents the fifth, one would be apt to suspect, that some transcribers have been tamper. ing with the book; and that, after they had alter'd the number of the commands of the first table, they forgot to alter the rest; and so that Clement bimself, reckon'd the precept about bonouring parents to be the fifth; and consequently that he divided the precepts of the first table into

four, as we do.

But Austin undoubtedly join'd the first and fecond commandments into one, and divided the tenth into two. This division has fince been follow'd by the church of Rome; which wrong division has been innocently, I am perfuaded, the occasion of a very immoral practice in that church, viz. The leaving out every word of what we call the fecond commandment, in many books of devotion, wherein it is however pretended, the ten commandments are re-And the better to conceal this fraud, the tenth command is divided into two, and so the number ten is still retain'd. The first occasion of which, seems to have been this, viz. When the prohibition of false gods, and of images, was thought to be but one command, a writer might sometimes think it too long to be recited at length, and so might set an &c. in the room of the greatest part of it. In this manner it is actually set down in the Catechi[mus

techismus ad parochos ex decreto Concilii Trident. Paris 1671. Thou Shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make to thee a graven image, &c. Thus, perhaps, it has been written fince the days of Austin. It is possible others put it somewhat shorter; Thou shalt have no other gods before me, &c. At length the &c. was quite drop'd; and so no hint was given of any more words belonging to the commandment. And finally, it became a prevailing custom in Popish books of devotion, and even in such as are publish'd by authority too, to omit every word of that which we call the fecond commandment. I have printed copies now by me, of the ten commandments in Latin, Saxon, French, and English, in which it is intirely omitted. The true design of which omission, was undoubtedly an apprehenfion, that if the common people were allow'd to read the fecond commandment, they would be led to fee and condemn the idolatry of the church of Rome. At the fame time the common people ought to be inform'd, that the church of Rome it self does at other times acknowledge, that the fecond commandment does really belong to the ten: fince in all the bibles printed by the Papists in Hebrew, Greek, or Latin, the ten commandments are recited both in Exod. xx. and in Deut. v. exactly as they E

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they are in the bibles printed among us. The first occasion of the omission of the second commandment, in books of devotion, was, as I just now observed, a supposition, that it is not a distinct command, but only a part of the first; and that what we call the tenth command, should be divided into two. But this is certainly a mistake. It is very unreasonable to suppose, that the tenth commandment should be divided into two, as it is divided by the Papists. The command is, Thou shalt not covet. That which follows, does not add any thing to the command; but only specifies some things and persons that are not to be coveted. Is it likely then, that these were intended to be thrown into distinct commands? And it is probable, the Jews, at fome times, have not thought they were: fince in their Hebrew copies of Exod. xx. the coveting of a house, stands before the coveting of a wife: whereas, in their own copies of Deut. v. the coveting of a wife stands before the coveting of a bouse. that if the Popish division were good, the ninth commandment, according to one copy, would be, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's WIFE: according to another, it would be, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's House. Accordingly we find, in fact, the Popish books sometimes make one to be the ninth commandment, sometimes the TEN COMMANDMENTS. 55
times the other. The catechism of the
council of Trent, the office of the blessed
Virgin Mary, published by the command of
Pope Pius V, and the treasury of devotion
collected by J. W. P. publish'd by permisfion of superiors, A. D. 1622. set down
the ninth and tenth commandment thus:

9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house.

10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, &c.

On the other hand, The Roman ritual of Pope Paul V.—Heures nouvelles par le Bossu, and the abrigement of Christian do-Etrine, Lond. 1708. set them in this order, viz.

9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.

10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, nor his man-servant, &c.

These things make it very likely, that they are not, and ought not, to be reckon'd two distinct commandments. For it is not easy to be thought, that the commandments were designed thus to shift places. And, if the Jewish transcribers of the law of Moses had entertain'd any apprehension, that there were two commands E 4 against

against coveting, they would, it is most likely, have kept to the same order of the words both in Exodus and Deuteronomy, The reader will observe, from the inverting the order of the words, bouse and wife, in the Hebrew copies of the ten commandments in Exodus and Deuteronomy, I have only infer'd what must, confistently with reason, have been the opinion of those Jews, who have transcribed the Hebrew copies of the bible, and who have never misplaced any others in their copies of the bible. Some learned men, I am sensible, have carried this matter farther, and have infer'd, that Moses himself placed the faid two words differently in the two copies he left us of the ten commandments. If this were so, I think, the controversy would be soon decided: Since it is not probable, that the lawgiver himself would fet that command for the ninth in one of his copies, which he fet for the tenth in the other. Whereas the changing the order of the two words boule and wife, would be of no consequence in the world, if they both belong'd to the same command. But, it cannot be certainly affirm'd, that these words were originally set in a different order in Deuteronomy, from what they were in Exodus. For, in the Greek translation, there is the same order observed in both places. The words both

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the TEN COMMANDMENTS. 57 n Exodus and Deuteronomy are, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife; Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, &c. On the contrary, the Samaritan text and verfion, in both places, set the bouse first, and read, Thou Shalt not covet thy neighbour's house; Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, &c. So that, perhaps, originally, the words were fet in the same order in both places in the Hebrew: Yet, still the variation in the present Hebrew copies shews what ought to be the opinion of the Jews in this regard. However, it must be own'd, that the modern Jewish transcribers of the Hebrew bible, have expresly declared for the contrary opinion. They have divided the law of Moses into several large sections, or chapters, distinguished by fetting three [PPP] at the head of each of them. They have divided it farther into less sections, which exactly answer to our paragraphs, distinguish'd by one [P] at the beginning. And they have farther divided it into a greater number of portions, where they do not begin a new paragraph, distinguished by the Letter [S] at the beginning. In this last way, they have divided the decalogue into ten parts, have made the first commandment reach as far as the words, Of them that love me and keep my commandments; and have divided the prohibition of coveting into two

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commands, making the ninth command in Exodus to be, Thou Shalt not covet the neighbour's house; but the ninth in Deuteronomy to be, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife. How the modern fews came to fall into this error, I cannot conceive. One would think, they would not eafily have learned it of the Papists. The now mentioned Jewish division of the ten commandments is found in Hebrew bibles, printed in Protestant countries, particularly in Leusden's edition at Amsterdam, 1667. So that one would imagine, it was originally Jewish, and that St. Austin learned it from them. But, on the other hand, it is very certain, that among the more ancient Yews, the ten commandments were divided as they are now by the Protestants. Philo the Jew says, the first five commands are those concerning the unity of God, concerning images, concerning the taking the name of God in vain, concerning the fabbath, and concerning the honouring parents. The other five (lays he) forbid adultery, murder, theft, falsewitness, and coveting. And, after he had finished his exposition of the command against imageworship, he says, Having spoken concerning the second commandment, I proceed to confider the third, which is, Not to take the name of God in vain. De Decalogo, p. 579. F. 583. E. Colon. 1613. Josephus expresly

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y numbers them in the same manner as we do, saying, The first command teaches us, that there is but one God, and that we must worship him alone; The second forbids the making and worshiping the image of any animal; The third forbids salse swearing; The ninth salse witness; The tenth coveting; Antiqu. Jud. L. III. Ch. v. p. 105. Edit. Hudson. As Philo and Josephus have divided the ten commandments, so they plainly ought to be divided; and so the command, which forbids the worshiping of images, ought to be call'd the second, as the Protestants always reckon it: Which is next to be explain'd.

In this fecond command there are two parts, viz. The precept and the sanction. The precept is contained in these words, Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thy self to them, nor serve them. In this command God forbad the Jews to make any images of the invisible God, to represent him, as like to any thing in heaven, earth, or Sea, and to worship him under these forms. To prevent any temptation to such worship of images as representatives of God, he took care, that when he appear'd to the fews on mount Sinai, at the time when he deliver'd

livered this law (as at all other times also) they should fee no shape at all that could be afterward represented by an image, as it is written, Deut. IV. 12, 15, &c. The Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire; ye heard the voice of the words, but faw no fimilitude [i. e. God did not appear in any shape, in the likeness of any thing in heaven, earth, or sea] only ye heard a voice. - Take ye, therefore, good heed unto your selves (for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb, out of the midst of the fire) lest ye corrupt your selves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male, or female, the likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air, the likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth; and lest thou lift up thine eyes to heaven, and when thou feest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldst be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the Lord thy God bath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven .- Take heed unto your selves, lest ye-make you a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, which the Lord thy God bath forbidden thee: For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire, a jealous God. We may, very properly, look upon

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upon this passage as an exposition of the second commandment. Though the expression goes no farther than the forbidding the Jews to make a graven image, or the likeness of man, beast, bird, or fish; yet it is plain from the passage itself, that God's design was to forbid them to make these images as representations of the invifible God. The reason, which is given against the making these images, demonstrates, that this is the intention of the The reason affigned is, because they had seen no manner of similitude when God appeared and spoke the law at Horeb. This is a very strong reason, why they should not make any image as a similitude of God. As he did not appear to them in any shape; so he ought not to be represented by any shape. But this reason does not hold against their making graven images of men, beafts, birds, fishes and insects, when the images were not intended to be representations of God, or to be used as objects or means of worship. Accordingly, God expresly order'd Moses to make images of things in beaven, even of the Angels, Exod. xxv. 18, 20. Thou shalt make two cherubs of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercyseat.—and the cherubs shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy-feat with their wings, and their faces shall look one

one toward another; toward the mercy-feat shall the faces of the cherubs be. In this. there was nothing contrary to the defign of the fecond commandment, as we may be fure; fince God bimfelf order'd the making these images, the likeness of Angels in heaven above. For the all-wife God cannot give inconfistent and contrary commands. The reason, why there was nothing inconsistent in these commands is, because these cherubs were not intended to be the representatives of God, nor were they fet up to be objects or means of worship. They were design'd to be representations of Angels, fignifying, that whereever God is, there his holy Angels attend him, that as God, in the cloud of glory, was present on the mercy-seat, so his Angels were there with him at hand to minister to him. Moses also, without sinning against the fecond commandment, made an image, the likeness of a thing on earth, viz. a brasen serpent, to represent the firy flying ferpents that had bitten the people, Numb. xx1. 8, 9. This brasen ferpent was not made to be an image of God, and fo the making it was not inconfistent with the design of the second commandment; as we are fure it could not possibly be, fince God himself required Moses to make this image of a serpent; nor was it intended to be worship'd as an image,

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mage, or representation of God. From all these things it is plain, that, when in the fore-cited passage, Deut. IV. 12, &c. God forbad the Jews to make images, and likenesses of men, beasts, birds, &c. he only meant to forbid their making these as representations of bimself, and the worshiping them as such. From hence it may be infer'd, that this is the whole meaning of the fecond commandment also, which is expressed in the same terms as the nowcited place of Deut. IV. Whatever is the meaning of the one must, certainly, be the meaning of the other: But it has been fully proved, that the latter means no more; it is certain then, that the second commandment means no more neither.

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The fame defign and meaning of the fecond commandment, may be learnt from other passages both of the Old Testament, and of the New. The prophet Isaiah argues against making idols from this consideration, that it is not in mens power to make any image that can represent the infinite and invisible God, Isa. XL. 18, &c. To whom then (says the prophet) will ye liken God? Or what likeness will ye compare unto him? The workman melteth (or rather, as it is in the Greek, maketh) a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver-chains: He chooseth a tree that will not rot; be

be seeketh unto him a cunning workman, to prepare a graven image that shall not be moved. But, this image will not resemble God, fince he is immense. He sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers, that stretcheth out the beavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in. By this description of God, expressed in strong, but beautiful figures, the prophet teaches us, that God is every where present throughout earth and heaven, and confequently, that no image could be made of him. From the same principle, St. Paul reproved the Athenians, faying, Acts, XVII. 29. Forasmuch as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think, that the Godhead is like to gold, or filver, or stone, graven by art, and man's device. Agreeably to this, the fame Apostle says, Rom. 1. 23. that the Heathens changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things; which images were defigned to be images of God. Of the same nature was the golden calf, made by the Israelites in the wilderness. For, when the calf was made, the Ifraelites faid, Exod. XXXII. 4. This is thy God, O Ifrael, who brought thee up out of the land of Egypt; as these words are rightly read and translated, Nehem. 1x. 18. Accordingly Agron

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the TEN COMMANDMENTS. 65
Aaron made proclamation, and said, To
morrow is a feast to the Lord; i.e. to febovab, the true God, represented by this
image. This sin of theirs, is the very sin
which was forbidden them in the second
commandment, and is what the scripture
has call'd Idolatry, Acts, VII. 41. They
made a calf in those days, and offer'd sacrifice unto the Idol, Gr. $\tau \omega \in \partial \omega \lambda \omega$.

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'feroboam's idolatry was of the same kind, viz. idolatry against the second commandment; i.e. a worshiping images of the true God. For, when he made his calves, he said to the people, Behold thy Gods (or thy God, as it is here in the Arabic, and in a parallel place in Nehemiah, just now mentioned) O Israel, who brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, 1 Kings, XII. 28. And, that this fin of Jeroboam was the idolatry forbidden in the second commandment, and not the worship of a false God forbidden in the first, is plain from hence, that his fin is said to be less than the fin of worshiping the image of Baal, I Kings, XVI. 31. where we read, that it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for Ahab to walk in the sins of Jeroboamthat he went and served Baal, and worshiped him; and so, in the language of the first commandment, had another God before Jehovah; which Jeroboam had not, because he worship'd his idols as images of

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the true God. In like manner, when Jebu worship'd Jeroboam's calves, he profes'd to have a great zeal for febovah, the true God, and destroy'd the priests and worshipers of Baal, 2 Kings x. 16, 19, 25-29. This worshiping the true God by images was very provoking in his fight, It is, unquestionably, a moral evil: And, therefore, God has given us a prohibition of it in the New Testament, I Cor. x. 7. Neither be ye idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, The people sat down to eat, and to drink, and rose up to play. These last words are cited from the history of the I/raelites worshiping the golden calf in the wilderness, which was idolatry against the second commandment; consequently, the idolatry here forbidden by the apostle is of the same kind, viz. The worshiping the true God by images.

The things forbidden in the first and second commandments are call'd idolatry, viz. worshiping false Gods, and worshiping images of the true God. The latter is call'd so in the text last cited, where the worshipers of the golden calf are said to have been idolaters. In the 14th verse of the same chapter, idolatry signifies the worship of false Gods. Flee from idolatry; which idolatry was a sacrificing to Demons, not to God, ver. 20. The word idolatry, does never, in scripture (when it is not

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the TEN COMMANDMENTS. nsed in a figurative sense) signify any thing else, than either worshiping false Gods, or worshiping images of the true God. So that no man ought to be accused of the crime of idolatry, who is not guilty of one or other of these fins. This word being borrowed from scripture, ought to be used only in that sense in which it is used in scripture. If we use it to fignify such things as are never in scripture call'd by the name of idolatry, the unhappy confequence will be, that we shall esteem such men as in a state of damnation (in which state all idolaters are) who, all the while, are not guilty of that fin which God has call'd idolatry, and which be has threat-Suppose a man ned with damnation. should take it in his head to define idolatry to be a doing any thing in the worship of God over and above what God has commanded us to do there: What would be the consequence? since the scripture over and over assures us, that idolaters shall not inberit the kingdom of God, I Cor. vi. 9, 10. Gal. v. 20, 21. fuch a man must necesfarily, if he will stand to his definition, determine, that no man can be faved, who does any uncommanded thing in the worship of God. But, this is such a determination as neither scripture, nor charity, nor common fense, will allow any one to make. But then, on the other hand, it F 2 must

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must be observed, that, though this fault ought not to be call'd, because really it is not, idolatry; yet that is no argument that it is no fault at all. If I fay, adultery is not drunkenness, I do not thereby imply, that adultery is no fin. Though it be not the particular fin of drunkenness, yet it is a fin still; a fin of another kind, and call'd by another name. In like manner, we may fay, a particular practice is not idolatry; and yet may believe, that it is a fin, and a heinous fin too. The worship that is paid to Angels and Saints in the church of Rome is, without question, a great fin, and a strange corruption of christianity. The apostle has expresly condemned it, Coloss. 11. 18. Let no man beguile you of your reward by a voluntary bu mility, and worshiping of Angels, intruding into those things which he bath not seen. Which words of the apostle shew, that. this is not only a fin, but a fin of fuch nature, as will deprive a man of his reward. Yet this fin is never, in scripture, call'd by the name of idolatry. And there is no more reason to call it idolatry, than there is to call murder by the name of ido latry. The name of this fin is Angel-wor. fbip, and Saint-worship. While the wor-Inipers of Saints and Angels only respect them as creatures and fervants of God, they are not guilty of the crime of ide latry

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the TEN COMMANDMENTS. 60 latry, as that word is used in scripture, but only of a crime that is called, creatureworship. But if in worshiping faints and angels, the worshiper uses such expressions as can, according to the rules of common fense, be applied, with truth, to none beneath the most bigh God; in that case he would really fet up the creature as a rival to God, as another God before him, and so would be guilty of the same kind of idolatry as those Heathens were, who worshiped Baal, or Moloch, which is forbidden in

the first commandment.

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Of that kind of idolatry, which is forbidden in the first commandment, I do not know that the church of Rome is guil-She teaches, that there is but one God, who is but one fingle Spirit. To this one Spirit, and to the several attributes and differences that are in him, she gives divine honours. But she, as a church, does not, as far as I can find, ascribe divine honours to any other spirit or being whatfoever. Tho', perhaps, at the same time, some warm, poetic and enthufiastic head, may have used such expressions in his prayers to faints, particularly to the bleffed virgin Mary, as ought to be used only to God himself. But both the private members of the church of Rome, and the church it felf, certainly stand chargeable with the other kind of idolatry, viz.

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the worshiping images of God. The sact is own'd by the writers of that church. Baronius makes express mention of the custom of painting God the Father. Ad An. 726. in a marginal note. In another place he says; The church is not to be condemn'd for making pictures of the Father. Ad An. 765. No. 8. Others of the Romish writers speak also of solid images of God the Father, and of the Trinity. And the late archbishop Tenison says; "It is not long since, here in England, some

" Protestants saw a filver image of God the

" Father carried in procession, in the pas-

" fion-week, and venerated with shews of high devotion." Of idolatry, Chap. XI.

p. 265.

The catechism, publish'd by order of the council of Trent, has judiciously observed, that the Israelites were guilty of idolatry, when they worship'd the golden cals: that the reason why this idolatry was forbidden, was, because they saw no manner of similitude in the day that God spake to them at mount Sinai; and that, on this account, they were forbidden to make images of God. Yet, in plain contradiction to this, the catechism immediately adds; However, it is not contrary to religion, to represent either person of the Trinity by signs, or images. The excuse made is, that no one can be so stupid as to imagine, that the deity is

like to the image. (On the first command, sect. 35, 36.) If this is true of the Papists, it was as true of the Israelites. And as this is allow'd not to save the Israelites in the wilderness, from the charge of idolatry, when they worship'd the calf as an image of God; much less will it vindicate the Papists, in making an image of an old man, and worshiping it as an image of God. For, if an image of a man cannot be thought to be like God; much less can an

image of a calf.

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As this is practifed by the people with the knowledge of the governors of the church, and without being forbidden; fo the council of Trent has declared for such representations of the Deity. The words of the council are, p. 360. Quod si aliquando bistorias & narrationes sacrae scripturae, cum id indoctae plebi expediet, exprimi & figurari contigerit, doceatur populus non propterea divinitatem figurari quasi corporeis oculis conspici vel coloribus aut figuris exprimi possit; i. e. " If it shall at " any time happen, that the historical nar-" rations of the holy scripture shall be ex-" pressed in figures, when it is expedient " for the unlearned, the people ought to " be informed, that when they see the fi-" gures of the Deity, they must not mifake, as if it could be seen by the eyes of the body, or be expressed in colours,

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" or figures." In this passage the council is so far from condemning the practice, and calling it idolatry, that it expressly declares, there are cases in which it is expedient for the unlearned. By representing it as expedient, the council does truly recommend the practice to all that are in the cases supposed to render it expedient. The council of Trent then has recommended idolatry as expedient; which gives it as much a santation, as a formal command could have

done.

This church's practice of praying to faints and angeis, must be condemned upon another account. Especially is it very wicked and abominable in them to pray to faints and angels for fuch things as it is not in their power to bestow. Nor is there any reason to prove that the departed saints can either bear, or belp us. Indeed, if they could hear and help us, there would be no manner of evil in desiring them to do for us any thing that is really in their power. But it would be ridiculous to ask them to do any thing for us, which we believed they were not capable of doing. If St. Paul could hear me, it would be no more harm to defire him to pray for me, than it was for one of his contemporaries to have defired an interest in his prayers, while he was living upon earth. But if St. Paul could hear me, and fo

the TEN COMMANDMENTS. 73 fo it were allowable for me to beg an interest in his prayers; still I should be obliged to look upon him as a creature, as a man that had finned, and therefore could esteem his prayers as no way meritorious of an answer, and as infinitely less than the intercession of Christ.

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This view of things shews, that St. John was not guilty of idolatry, or, indeed, of any fin at all, when he gave thanks to the angel, who appear'd to him, for the kindnels he had done him. The ambiguity of the word, worship, has led some people to think, that St. John was about to give divine worship to the angel: of which stupid impropriety and idolatry, the holy apoftle was not capable of being guilty. The word, worship, is often used to signify such respect as it is allowable to pay to men. Thus it is faid; All the congregation worshiped the Lord, and the King, I Chron. XXIX. 20. Where the worshiping the king, fignifies no more than paying fuch civil respect and homage as was due to king David. In the same sense Christ says; Thou shalt have worship in the presence of them that fit at meat with thee, Luke, XIV. 10. thereby meaning, Thou shalt have that degree of respect that is due to thee. In like manner, when it is said, Rev. XIX. 10. that St. John fell at the feet of the angel to worthip bim: all the meaning

is, that St. John was about to thank the angel for bringing to him the revelations he had now received. This more evidently appears from the account of the other time, when St. John was doing the same thing, Rev. XXII. 8. I, John (says he) saw these things, and heard them. And when I had beard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel, who shewed me these things, i.e. "I was going, in a hum-" ble manner, according to the custom of the country, to give him thanks for " shewing them to me." The custom of falling at the feet of fuch as men greatly reverenced, may be feen, I Sam. xxv. 24. 2 Kings, Iv. 37. Matt. xvIII. 29. Acts, x. 25. and in some other places of scripture. This account of the matter, perfectly well agrees with the answer which the angel gave to St. John at both times, See thou do it not. I am thy fellow servant, and the fellow servant of thy brethren: worship God. The meaning of which is plainly this: The angel rightly confider'd himself as a mere servant in the affair; on which account no thanks were due to him. The angel is more absolutely the property, and under the government of God, than a flave is under his master. As then no thanks are due to a flave, who brings me a prefent from his master, whom he must obey in bringing me the present, whether he is wilwilling to bring it or not: fo no thanks could be due to the angel, on the account of his bringing a message to the apostle; because he was obliged to bring it in obedience to the command of God, whether he was willing or not. All the thanks were, in this case, due to God, who imploy'd and fent him. This representation of the case, shews how it might come to pass that St. John should twice fall into this error of attempting to worship the angel. If there had been any idolatry in the case, it cannot be supposed that the boly apostle should have been once guilty of it. But it is not at all difficult to conceive, that even a good man, in a fit of gratitude, overcome with a fense of the great favour that was done him, should offer to give thanks to a messenger of an order of beings superior to himself; though the thanks were not really due to him, but only to the person who sent him.

Thus much for the command it felf. To this command, or rather, to both the first and fecond commandments, God was pleased to add a fanction, consisting both of a promise and of a threatning. The sanction is; I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy

mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. Great and insuperable difficulties have arisen from mens imagining, that in these words God spake to fingle persons; which are all avoided by observing, that herein God spake to the whole nation of the Jews, as one body, This is demonstrable from hence; that if we understand the threatning, and the promise as made to particular persons, it is impossible they should both be accomplished. This will be evident by an instance, When the nation of the Jews was carried captive into Babylon, the Chaldeans removed both bad and good. If the promise of shewing mercy had been made to a particular good man, by himself, and to thoufand generations of bis posterity after him; this promise must have secured bim from being carried captive. Since it did not, it is plain, the promise was not made to particular good men, but to the nation in general. The same is true of the threatning. If God had therein meant, that every particular man among the Jews, who was an idolater, should be punish'd in this life, and his children after him, to three or four generations; then this idolater, and his family, must have been distinguish'd from their better neighbours; and when the rest were favour'd, these must have been remarkably punish'd: which

the TEN COMMANDMENTS. which we have no reason to think was the The proper meaning therefore of the Janction is this, viz. That if the nation of the Jews, as a nation, did violate the first or second commandment, and did practife either of the kinds of idolatry therein forbidden, God would punish the nation for it, by fending upon that people some judgment that should last for three or four generations: but if the nation would retain the true worship of God, he would preferve the nation in peace and happiness for a thousand generations. The threatning was actually accomplish'd by the Babylonish captivity; when the nation of the Yews was carried captive, and reduced to a state of slavery for seventy years; in which time a man might fee a third and fourth generation born. He that was forty years of age when the nation was carried captive, might see, or at least, leave behind him, grand-children, who should be deliver'dat the end of the seventy years. And he that was fixty years of age at the beginning of the captivity, might see his grandchildren carried captive with him, and might easily leave great grand-children behind to be restored to their own land, at the end of the seventy years. This interpretation of the fanction, added to the two first commandments, will evidently appear to be the true one, to those who

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shall, with care and observation, read over the twenty eighth chapter of Deu-

teronomy.

It will not be amiss to add, that this promise, and this threatning, were made only to the Jews, and not to us. God does not now see fit to interpose in this immediate and miraculous manner, to judge other nations, as he did the Jews. In Popish countries, that very kind of idolatry, which was forbidden in the fecond commandment, has been a national fin for many more than three or four generations. To which fin also they have added another, nearly of equal guilt, I mean persecution: and yet God does not visit the iniquities of the fathers of many generations past, upon their children; though their children perfift in all the wickedness too. But, at the same time, it must not be forgotten, that a righteous God, who now fuffers the wicked to live in ease and prosperity, will, in the other world, punish every idolater and persecutor in his own person: when his faithful and persecuted servants shall receive a plenteous reward for all their fidelity and patience; when their light afflictions, which can be but for a moment, in comparison of eternity, shall appear to have work'd out for them a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory. The

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The THIRD Commandment.

Exod. xx. 7. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

The name of God fignifies any word or expression which signifies God, or whereby God is known. His proper name is Jehovah, by which he is distinguish'd from Baal, Moloch, Jupiter, Mercury, and the rest of the false gods. Besides his proper name, there are many other words and expressions which signify him. The words, God, The God, The Lord, Father, Creator, Most High, The Almighty, &c. signify the same Person as Jehovah. So that a man equally swears by the name of God, whether he uses the word, God, or Almighty, or Creator, or any other word or expression, that signifies Him.

That taking the name of God, fignifies swearing by it, is, I suppose, universally allow'd. Philo the Jew, in his exposition of the decalogue, interprets this command, as forbidding perjury, and all needless swearing, p. 583, &c. Colon. 1613. Josephus expresses the command thus: Not to swear by God in vain, or falsly, edit. Hudson, p. 105. This sense of the command is confirm'd

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by the Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic verfions, both of Exodus and Deuteronomy; wherein the command is thus expressed: Thou shalt not swear falfly by the name of the Lord thy God. That the word here render'd, in vain, may fignify falfly, is very evident from the ninth commandment. In the ninth commandment, as recited Deut. v. 20. the word render'd, false, is the same as is in the third command; whereas, in Exod. xx. the word is שקר in both places it is evident, the command condemns a false witness. In like manner it would be proper to render the third commandment thus: Thou shalt not swear falsly by the name of the Lord thy God. For the Lord will not hold him guiltless that sweareth falsly by his name.

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When God said, he would not hold the perjur'd person guiltless, he meant, he would esteem him guilty of a great sin, and treat him accordingly. There are many other places of the Old Testament, wherein God threatens to punish this sin of perjury, as Malach. 111. 5. I will come near to you to judgment, and I will be a swift witness—against false swearers. See also Hosea, 1. 1, 2, 3. Zech. v. 3, 4. Accordingly the Israelites expected, that the wrath of God would light upon them in case they should break their solemn oath, Josh.

the TEN COMMANDMENTS. Josh. Ix. 19,20. All the princes said to all the congregation, We have sworn unto them by the Lord God of Israel; now therefore we may not touch them. This we will do to them : we will even let them live, lest wrath be upon us, because of the oath which we sware unto them. And when men had been guilty of this fin, in order to cover their knavery in defrauding their neighbour, God order'd, that besides making restitution, and satisfaction, they should offer a facrifice to atone for the fin, and to procure forgiveness, Lev. vi. 1-7.

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Perjury is a moral evil, forbidden to all mankind by the law of nature. Accordingly, as God forbid it to the Jews by the third commandment, he has forbidden it to the Gentiles by the gospel. The apostle tells us, 1 Tim. 1. 9, 10, 11. The law (or rather, as 'tis in the Greek, A law) is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient—for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to found doctrine, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God. Perjury then, or false swearing, is one of those things which are contrary to the do-Etrine taught in the gospel.

The gospel carries the matter farther, not only forbidding false swearing, but all vain and light oaths in common conversation. Matt. v. 33, &c. Ye have heard,

that

that it hath been said to them of old time. Thou shalt not for swear thy self, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths. But I (fays our Lord) Jay unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Neither Shalt thou Swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one bair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for what soever is more than these cometh of evil. In the beginning of this passage, our Saviour feems to refer to the third commandment. Those words, Thou Shalt not forswear thy self, are certainly design'd by our Saviour, as a quotation out of the Old Testament; and they are the proper rendring of the third commandment; which, as we faid just now, should be translated thus: Thou Shalt not swear falfly; which is the very same thing. Our Saviour adds; But I say to you, Swear not at all. If Christ had stop'd short here, there would have feem'd to be strong evidence, that he defign'd to forbid all oaths what soever, as absolutely unlawful upon every occasion. But if we confider what Christ adds to this prohibition, it will eafily appear, that the things which he here intends to forbid, are only these two, viz. Swearing by the creatures, and swearing in common conversation.

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versation. That he is here to be underflood as speaking of mens swearing by the creatures, is plain, from his giving instances of mens swearing by the creatures, and no other instances of oaths at all. words are; Swear not at all; neither by heaven, nor by the earth, nor by ferufalem, nor by thy head. The Jews, in our Saviour's time, allow'd themselves to swear by the creatures in their common conversation, while they own'd it to be unlawful to swear by God, in such their communications with one another; as is manifest from comparing the now cited place with Matt. xxvIII. 16—22. Our Saviour agrees with them, that it is unlawful to Iwear by God, in common discourse; and in order to convince the Jews, that it was unlawful to swear by the creatures, he proves, that this, in the end, is the very same thing as mens swearing by God, which they already own'd to be unlawful. He argues therefore, that swearing by heaven, is swearing by the throne of God; that Iwearing by the earth, is Iwearing by God's footstool; that swearing by Jerusalem, is swearing by God's city. To swear by these things, cannot fignify any thing else but this; We wish the heaven, the earth, and Jerusalem, may be destroy'd, if what we lay be not true! But no one can destroy them besides God, whose they are. Who-G 2 ever

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ever then wishes they may be destroy'd does really call upon God to destroy them: fo that to swear by these things, is really a calling upon God, and a swearing by God It is the same as to a man's swearing by his head. For, as our Saviour fays, we cannot make one hair white or black; much less then is it in our power to preserve or destroy our own heads. God is their Maker, and Preserver; and he alone can destroy them. If then we should swear by our beads, and wish they were destroy'd in case we do not speak the truth; we should thereby really call upon God, in that case, to destroy them; and so should really fwear by God, as much as if his name had been expresly mention'd in the oath Our Saviour having proved, that swearing by the creatures, or wishing they may be destroy'd, is the same, in the end, as swear ing by God, who alone can destroy them proceeds next to shew, that we must new ther fwear by the creatures, nor by God in common conversation. Swear not at all fays he; but let your communication, of discourse, be yea, yea; nay, nay: for what soever is more than these, cometh of evil From hence it is exceedingly manifelt that Christ did not intend to forbid men taking a folemn oath, when either a lawful magistrate, or the important nature of the case require it. Without all question, ou blek

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the TEN COMMANDMENTS. bleffed Saviour's own practice was never in the least inconsistent with his precepts, or with the doctrines he taught. When he faid, Amen, amen, i. e. Verily, verily I say unto you, &c. he said, What is more than yea, yea; and yet undoubtedly this did not come of evil. The reason is; because he was not ingaged in any common conversation; but was talking of most ferious and important things, which were worthy of fuch folemn confirmation as this. Lord went farther than this, and answer'd upon oath before a magistrate. The high priest said to him; I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us, whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus replied; Thou hast faid; which is the same as saying, Thou hast said the truth, or, I am the Christ, as it is in St. Mark, Matt. xxv1.63,64. Mark, xIV. 62. Before the high priest adjured our Saviour, he would not fay, whether he was the Christ or not, but held his peace, even though the same high priest put the question to him, Mark, xIV. 60, 61. Luke, xXII. 67, 68. But when the high priest adjured him to tell the truth, Christ paid a religious regard to the oath of God, and immediately gave a direct and true answer. That this his an-Swering, when he was adjured by the magistrate, was really being sworn, or answering upon oath, is plain from the method

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thod of administring an oath among the Fews, mention'd in the Old Testament. It was not their way to repeat the words of the oath after an officer appointed to administer it: but the magistrate pronounced the whole oath, and the person sworn sometimes faid, Amen; thereby testifying his consent to be sworn. In this way the Israelites folemnly swore to avoid certain fins, Deut. XXVII. 15, &c. The Levites, by God's appointment, said, Cursed be the man that maketh any graven, or molten image, &c. and all the people Shall Jay, Amen, i. e. Be it fo; Let the curse of God light upon us, if we do not perform our promise of keeping our selves free from idolatry. Their faying, Amen, made the oath as truly their own, as if they had, after the English manner, repeated every word of the adjuration. Sometimes, when the magistrate adjured the people, they did not expresly say, Amen: and yet they thought themselves as truly sworn, and as much bound by their oath, as if they had. for instance, I Sam. XIV. 24, &c. Saul adjured the people, saying, Cursed be the man that eateth any food until evening, that I may be avenged on mine enemies: so none of the people tasted any food-for the people feared the oath. But Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the gath; wherefore be put forth the end of the 204

the TEN COMMANDMENTS. rod that was in his band, and dip'd it in a boney-comb, and put his hand to his mouth. From this passage we learn, that the Jews look'd upon their magistrates as having an authority to charge the people upon oath, which oath should be reckon'd binding to every one that heard, when it was pronounced. Their not expresly saying Amen to it, did not fave them from being sworn: If it would, many of the people, who had not faid, Amen, would have thought it lawful to eat meat that day, notwithstanding the curse, which Saul pronounced. But we find all the people feared the oath, and abstained from eating, because they were sworn not to eat. Jonathan did not fin by eating; because he was not present, and did not bear when the oath was administer'd. Had he been there, he had been bound by the oath as well as the rest. Nay, if he had been told of his father's adjuring the people, before he had tasted the honey, he ought to have abstained from it, out of regard to the oath. This manner of administring an oath, is hinted at Lev. v. i. If a foul sin, and hear the voice of swearing, i. e. hear the magistrate adjure him to tell the truth, and is a witness, whether he bath seen or known of it, if he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity. Accordingly, when the high priest adjured our Saviour, he thought himself bound G 4

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bound to give a direct and plain answer; and did then as much take an oath, as the people whom Saul adjured not to eat, who are expressly said to be bound by their oath.

It is certain also from St. Paul, that it is in some cases lawful for christians to take an oath. He expresly says, that an oath may be of use among men to determine controversies which could not be otherwise decided, Heb. v1. 16. Men swear by the greater; i. e. call a person to be a witness, who is greater and more powerful than themselves, who is able to punish them, if they swear falfly; and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. In which words, the apostle is so far from saying, that an oath is in itself unlawful, upon all occasions, that he plainly speaks of mens custom of using an oath to decide a dispute, as a thing that is useful. And his speaking of it, as a very useful thing, necessarily implies, that it is lawful: For nothing can be unlawful in itself, which has such a plain tendency to do good, if universally allow'd and practis'd. There is no other way of proving, by the light of nature, that a practice is allowable and virtuous, but by shewing, that the universal practise of it, upon all occasions that call for it, will naturally, and necessarily do more good than hurt:

hurt: Since then, the allowing men to interpose an oath in order to put an end to all strife, tends as much to promote the good of mankind, as strife, and all the natural consequences of it, tend to do burt; it must necessarily be lawful in all such cases. And, where strife cannot be ended without an oath, it must be mens duty to make use of an oath, in order to put an

end to so great an evil.

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The same apostle, agreeably to this doctrine, did himself take an oath; that is, he folemnly appeal'd to God, as a witness of the truth of what he faid, 2 Cor. XI. 31. The God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lye not. Chap. 1. 23. I call God for a record upon my foul; i. e. " I appeal to "God as a witness of the truth of what " I say, being sensible at the same time, " that he will take vengeance upon my " foul, if I speak what I know to be false." Rom. 1. 9. God is my witness. Gal. 1. 20. Behold, before God, I lye not. All these are, very plainly, forms of fwearing. any one should say they are not, I would not contend with him about a word. would lay afide the words oath, swearing, &c. and only defire him to grant me, that a christian may lawfully, when there is a sufficient occasion for it, after the example of the holy apostle, writing under the

the influence of the holy and infallible spirit of God, make use of either of the above-cited forms of expression. If he may, then let him confider, whether there is any thing in the forms of swearing, required by our laws, more than there is in the forms of speaking here cited from the apostle. Does not the apostle's expression, I call God for a record upon my foul, carry the matter as far as the expression, appointed by our laws, so help me God? If the one expression imprecates the curse of God in case we testify what is false, does not the other imprecate the fame, and that even upon the foul itself? If any one then will maintain, that these expressions of the apostle are not forms of swearing, he must necessarily also maintain, provided he will be confistent with himself, that those expressions appointed by our laws, which we call oaths, are really not oaths, and so may be lawfully used by such as scruple to take an oath. But it should always be remember'd, that, whenever such expressions are used, or oaths are taken, it must be in the fear of God, and in the most ferious manner. And, when men have fworn, they ought to think themfelves oblig'd most carefully to perform. This is a character of a good man given us by the pfalmist, that be sweareth to his neighbour, and changeth not, Pfal. xv. 4. For so is this passage well render'd in the old Greek, Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Æthiopic versions. And this is, undoubt-

edly, the true rendring.

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Upon mentioning the legal forms of oaths in England, I would beg leave humbly to move, whether it might not be worth the Legislature's while to consider, whether swearing deists upon the gospels can have any more influence on them, than fwearing christians upon the alcoran; and whether, therefore, it would not be most expedient to have nothing in an oath, befides calling upon God as a witness of truth, and an avenger of falshood? and whether, if oaths were less common, there would not be more just regard to the religion of an oath, for which the Government can never keep up too high a regard in the minds of the people?

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The FOURTH Commandment.

Exod. xx. 8——11. Remember the sabbath day to keep it boly. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

The sabbath day fignifies a day of rest, like the day in which God rested from his works of creation. It is as if God had faid, "Remember the day wherein I rested " from my work, and keep it holy by rest-" ing from your works, after my example. " In remembrance of that first sabbath, or " rest, do ye keep the weekly return of it " holy, by ceasing from your worldly la-" bours, and by spending the day in the " worship of God." Accordingly we read, that on the fabbath there was to be a boly convocation, or an affembly of the Jews at the tabernacle, and temple, for God's folemn public worship, Lev. xx111. 3. SIN

Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation, ye shall do no work therein; it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwel-

lings.

Le Clerc, indeed, would have this boly convocation to be nothing else than the Jews laying aside all business, and meeting together for diversions. Answerably he says, that this law required nothing but leifure for the benefit of fervants; see his notes on Exod. xx. 8. But, it is very plain from other places of the law of Moses, that this valuable commentator has, in this place, mistaken his sense. There is one paffage, I am fure, wherein the words holy convocation, cannot possibly fignify mens meeting together, animi oblectandi causa, for the sake of diversions; and that is, Lev. XXIII. 27. Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement; it shall be an holy convocation unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord. And ye Shall do no work in that same day; for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the Lord your God. For, what soever foul it be, that shall not be afflicted in that same day, be shall be cut off from among his people. In this place, it is very evident, that the holy convocation was defigned for the exercise

ercise of sorrow, and not for diversions; and fignifies the Israelites meeting together to worship God by sacrifices, and by humble confession of fin, and prayers for pardon. The expression of afflicting their fouls, cannot fignify less than confession and prayer, attended with fasting. Le Clerc, indeed, would have this expression only to fignify, abstaining from meat, and drink, and bathing, and anointing, and putting on shoes, and making the bed; on Lev. XVI. 29. But, we shall have reason to think otherwise, if we consider, that this boly convocation was appointed on purpose to make atonement for fin, by the offering of certain sacrifices appointed for that purpose: At which time, it is but natural to expect, that men should confess their fins, and ask forgiveness. Nay, farther, the law expresty mentions the confession of sin on the day of atonement, Lev. xvi. 21. And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat. This confession also was made by the high priest, not in the boly place, whither the people might not enter, but in the open court, or yard before the house, where the altar of burnt-offerings stood, and where the people were present to hear, and join with

When in the fourth commandment God faid, Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work, he meant to teach them, that they must not waste their time in idleness, but should imploy themselves in some honest trade or business: But the principal thing intended by this direction was, that they should confine their labour within the six days of the week, sinish it therein, and leave none of it to the sabbath. This is

farther explain'd in what follows.

But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger, that is within thy gates. This expression, the sabbath of the Lord, שברו ליהור, the sabbath appointed by the Lord, as מומור לרור, fignifies a psalm made by David; or else the sabbath kept holy to the bonour of the Lord; or else both together, as הון לאל, fignifies that Melchisedeck was both appointed a priest by God, Heb. v. 4. and separated to the bonour of God.

In this passage we have an account of the reason why God appointed a day of rest from labour, viz. That the poor slaves and cattle might not be work'd to death, but might have a little time for rest and breathing, one day in seven: as this mat-

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the TEN COMMANDMENTS. ter is yet more strongly express'd in the other edition of the ten commandments, Deut. v. 14. That thy men fervant, and thy maid-servant, may rest as well as thou. The strangers also, who came from other countries to dwell among the Ifraelites, were commanded to observe this time of rest: which was a thing very reasonable. If the stranger was become a proselyte to the 'Yewish religion, commonly call'd a proselyte of justice, it was fit he should be oblig'd to observe all the same laws, as the native Jews. If he were not a profelyte to their whole religion, and was not circumcised, but only renounced idolatry, and believed in, and worship'd the true God; yet, as long as he defired to live among the Jews, and to be under their protection, it was most reasonable, that he (though not a flave, but a master of himself) should rest from his labours on the Jabbath day; and not, by ingaging in the work of his trade, disturb them, whose thoughts were, at that time, turn'd to subjects of religion, and to the worship of God, even as he would not like to be disturb'd at his times of worship; wherefore the same time ought to be had for both.

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In the two different editions of the fourth command, there are two different reasons of it assign'd; but they are per
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feetly confistent with one another. The reason mention'd in Exodus is, For in fix days the Lord made beaven and earth, the fea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallow'd it. This reason is not, in the least, hinted at in the fourth command, as repeated in Deuteronomy: But there the reason of appointing a sabbath is thus express'd, That thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, may rest as well as thou. And remember that thou wast a slave in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm; therefore, the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day. This reason affigued in Deuteronomy, is not a reason of God's appointing the seventh day for a sabbath, but merely a reason of his appointing a day of rest. The reason is, because, while the Jews were in Egypt in a state of slavery, their task-masters confined them to hard labour from day to day without any intermission; so that they could not observe the sabbath as they should. When God set them at liberty, and made them masters, he righteously expected, that they should use their own liberty better, and deal more mercifully with their slaves and servants than the Egyptians had dealt with them; and so he

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he required them to permit their servants to rest one day in seven, as often as they themselves did. This was one reason why God appointed a sabbath, or a day of rest from labour. But this reason did not determine, whether this rest should be observed every sixth, every seventh, every eighth day, or what other portion of time should be chosen for this purpose. But the reason why God appointed every seventh day, rather than every sixth, eighth, &c. and why he determin'd it should be the seventh, or the last of the seven, was, because he finish'd his works of creation in

fix days, and rested on the seventh.

This account of the two reasons of the fourth command, feems fo very plain, and obvious to me, that I cannot but wonder to find Mr. Mede in a different scheme. In his xvth discourse, he supposes, that the reason urged from God's creating all things in fix days, and resting on the feventh, was a reason only, why the Jews should keep holy one day in seven; and that the reason alledged in Deuteronomy, is a reason why the Jews should pitch upon that particular day, which we call Saturday. consequence of this he would suppose, that it was a Saturday when Pharaoh and his army were drown'd in the Red Sea; and that therefore the sabbath was fix'd to that day. But of all this there is no proof H 2

produced. All that is offer'd as proof is, Deut. v. 15. Remember that thou wast a slave in the land of Egypt; and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Jabbath-day. as these words do not expresly say, that the Saturday was fixed for a fabbath, because the Israelites were delivered, and the Egyp. tians drown'd that day; so neither is any fuch thing here intimated. The reason asfign'd why God required the Jews to keep a sabbath is, That thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou: which has nothing to do with the particular day on which Pharaoh was drown'd. The following words are to be paraphrased thus: And, that thou mayst let thy slaves rest, as well as thou, remember that thou wast a slave in the land of Egypt, where thou wouldst have been glad of rest: and, remember that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty band; fo as that now thou art not a flave, but a master of thy own time; Therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the fabbath day, both because thou art deliver'd, and art thy own master, and because thy slaves may rest also with thee.

Curcellaeus also has a strange notion, that this fourth command merely required the

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the TEN COMMANDMENTS. 101

keeping holy one day in feven, but does not determine whether this Jeventh day must be reckon'd from the beginning of the creation, or from some other aera. De esu sanguinis, cap. 6. p. 65. But it seems plain from the words of the command it felf, that the Jews were thereby bound down to observe that very particular day for a sabbath; which, in fact, they did observe. That the fabbath was actually observed before the fourth commandment was given, is very plain from the history of the first coming of the manna, which came on the fixteenth day of the second month, Exod. XVI. 1, 12. whereas the ten commandments were not given till above a fortnight after, in the third month, Exod. XIX. I. But, at the time of the first coming of the manna, Moses spoke to the people concerning the observation of the fabbath, saying, on the fixth day of the week, To morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord, Exod. XVI. 22, 23. Since then the fabbath was observed before the fourth commandment was given, this fourth commandment cannot but be thought to refer to the day before observ'd, when it says; The seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God, i. e. " not any day which you please; but that " particular day, which you are already " accustomed to call the seventh day." This could not leave the Jews at liberty H 3

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worked on the Saturday. For the Friday was the fixth day of the week, and expressly so called, Exod. xvi. 5, 22. Since then the commandment does not say, The sixth day is the sabbath, the Jews could not make that day their sabbath; but as it says, The seventh day is the sabbath, they were bound to observe that particular day; which at, and before the giving of the commandment, was known by the name

of the seventh day.

Every one will own, I suppose, that the first sabbath that was ever observ'd, was fix'd by the appointment of God himself; and men were not left to choose what day they pleas'd for the first sabbath. This first fabbath was a rule to fix all succeeding fabbaths. The fecond was fix'd to be exactly seven days after the first; the third feven days after the fecond, and so on, till the abolition of the Jewish law. If the Fews should now agree, that they would, for the time to come, keep every Friday for a fabbath, they would herein break the fourth command; because, not the fixth, but the seventh day of the week, is the Lord's fabbath; and also, because in this case, they would not, immediately upon making the alteration, labour fix days, as the law requires, but only five, between Sabbath and Sabbath, contrary to the expres

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press directions of the fourth commandment. At what time the fabbath was first obferved, is not agreed among learned men. Some imagine, it was first observed at the time of the giving the manna. for this there does not feem to be any foundation. Indeed, this is the first time that we read expresly of the observation of the fabbath. But at that time we read of it as an old, establish'd custom. The people well understood Moses, when he talk'd to them of the fixth day, Exod. xv1. 4, 5. Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold I will rain bread from beaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day. - And it shall come to pass, that on the fixth day, they shall prepare that which they bring in, and it shall he twice as much as they gather daily. Where, by the fixth day, there is no room to suspect that he meant the fixth day after this promise of manna was given, or the fixth day after the manna fell; but he plainly means the fixth day of the week. The fense is this; The people shall gather a certain rate every day of the week; and on the fixth day of the week they shall prepare it. In this same sense are the words yet more uncontestedly to be understood in this same history of the first falling of the manna, ver. 21, 22, 23. And they gathered it every morning [of the week] - And it H 4. came

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came to pass, that on the sixth day [of the week] they gather'd twice as much bread. - And Moses said unto them, This is that which the Lord bath said; To morrow is the rest of the boly sabbath unto the Lord. And when the fabbath was come, Moses said, Eat that to day: for this day is a fabbath unto the Lord, ver. 25. By which Moses does not appear to mean, that this was the first time they ever observed a sabbath; but he seems plainly to mean, that this was the return of the fabbath; which was of long standing, and which they had often observ'd heretofore. God did not now order that the Jews should keep the sabbath, because the manna fell fix days before it, or because no manna fell on that day: but he took care that no manna should fall on that day, because it was the sabbath. The fall of the manna did not regulate the fabbath; but the fabbath regulated the fall of the manna. So that the fabbath appears to have been older than the falling of the manna. This same thing will farther appear from ver. 26, &c. Six days [of the week] ye shall gather it; but on the feventh day [of the week] which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none. And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day [of the week] for to gather, and they found none. See, for that the Lord bath [heretofore] given you the

the TEN COMMANDMENTS. the sabbath; therefore he giveth you on the fixth day [of the week] the bread of two days .- Let no man go out of his place on the seventh day [of the week.] So the people rested on the seventh day [of the week.] These things shew how little reason there is for Mr. Mede's supposition, That the Jews kept not that same day which they kept afterward for a sabbath, till the raining of manna. Disc. xv. What he offers to prove it, is deliver'd in the following words: " For that which should have been their " fabbath the week before, had they then " kept the day which afterward they kept, " was the fifteenth day of the second " month; on which day, we read in the " fixteenth of Exodus, that they marched " a wearisome march, and came at night " into the wilderness of Sin: — that night " the Lord fent them quails; the next " morning it rain'd manna, which was " the fixteenth day; and fo fix days to-" gether: the feventh, which was the twen-" ty fecond, it rained none; and that day " they were commanded to keep for their " fabbath. Now if the twenty fecond day " of the month were a fabbath, the fif-" teenth should have been, if that day had " been kept before. But the text tells us " expresly, they marched that day." this reasoning of Mr. Mede, is built on a suppolition, that the first falling of the manna,

was on a Sonday morning; and that the fabbath was determin'd to be the feventh day after the falling of the manna. But there is nothing in the text, that will incline one to think this. That the manna was first given on the fixteenth day of the fecond month, is beyond dispute. But the question is, On what day of the week it was? Mr. Mede thought, that from this fixteenth day of the month, it rained fix days together, till the fabhath. But, how does this appear? The text does not fay, or even intimate, that there were fix days between the first raining of manna, and the fucceeding fabbath. There might be but two or three days between. All that has inclined any to think that there were fix, is that Moses speaks of fix days; which they took to fignify fix days after the first falling of the manna. Whereas I have now shew'd, from several passages in the fame history, that the fix days are the fix days of the week; that the fixth day does not fignify the fixth day after the raining of manna, but the fixth day of the week; and that the feventh day, mention'd by Moses in the same history, is not the seventh day after the falling of the manna, but the seventh day of the week. This is absolutely demonstrable from Exod. xvi. The first sabbath after the first coming of the manna, was that mention'd ver. 25. where

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where Moses Said, Eat that to day: for to day is a sabbath unto the Lord. Then it follows; fix days ye shall gather; but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none. In this verse it is evident the fix days were not the fix days that follow'd the first gathering of manna, fince they follow'd the first Jabbath which fucceeded that gathering. Here the fix days must necessarily signify the fix days of the week; and the feventh must fignify, not the feventh after the first gathering of manna, (for it was, at least, the eighth or ninth; Mr. Mede would say, the fourteenth after) but the seventh day of the week: which is the common meaning of these words throughout all the scripture. Anfwerably then, in the preceding verses, it is most natural to interpret the words, the fixth day, and the seventh day, as fignifying the fixth and seventh day of the week; as is done in the foregoing paraphrase of those verses. If so, then we have no need to suppose with Mr. Mede, that the first fabbath which happen'd after the first raining of manna, was on the twenty second day of the fecond month. The fixteenth, on which the manna first came, might have been a Monday, a Tuesday, or a Wednesday, a Thursday, or a Friday. On the day preceding either of these days, it would have been proper to have said what was faid

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faid on this occasion, viz. To morrow I will rain bread for you: on the fixth day, or on Friday (i.e. on every Friday, and particularly the next Friday) it shall be twice as much as they gather daily. If the manna was first fent on a Monday morning, the following fabbath was the twenty first day of the month; if on a Tuesday, the following fabbath was the twentieth; if on a Wednesday, the following sabbath was the nineteenth; if on a Thursday, the following sabbath was the eighteenth; if on a Friday, as archbishop Usher supposes, the fabbath was on the feventeenth: fo that there is no manner of occasion to suppose, that the fifteenth day of the second month was a sabbath; or that, in case the Yews observed the sabbath before this time, it was now changed from one day to another.

It appears then, that the fabbath had no manner of dependence upon the falling of the manna; but that the falling of the manna depended on the fabbath, as it was withheld whenever the fabbath return'd, for that very reason, because the fabbath was come, as the express words of the history are, ver. 29. because the Lord bath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day [of the week] the bread of two days. These words very plainly shew, that the coming of the manna was to give

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way to the fabbath, and to be regulated by it; and that the fabbath was older than the

first coming of the manna.

And, indeed, the fabbath feems to have been as old as mankind; being instituted in the beginning by God, as those words of Moses fairly imply, or rather directly affert, Gen. 11. 1, 2, 3. Thus the heavens and the earth were finish'd, and all the host of them. And on the fixth day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God bleffed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from all his work, which God created and made. On this passage it is needful first to observe the reason why I vary from our English translation in reading, on the fixth day God ended his work. Our translators indeed have faithfully render'd the present Hebrew text, which reads, On the feventh day. But the true original reading is preserved in the more correct copy of the Hebrew text, found among the Samaritans, in their version of the text, and in the old Greek translation. And thus the text was read by Philo (Allegor. lib. 1. initio.) by Josephus (Antiq. lib. 1. c. 1. lect. 1.) and by Irenaeus (lib. v. c. 28. P. 445.) And besides all this, the truth of the thing requires this reading: for God did not end his work on the seventh day;

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day; but he really ended it on the fixth,

and rested on the seventh.

As God himself rested on the seventh day, he was pleased to bless and sanctify the seventh day. This his bleffing and san-Etifying the seventh day, is a thing distinct from his own resting on it, as is evident; because the one is affigned as the reason of the other. God blessed it, because be bad therein rested. His bleffing and sanctifying it then, must necessarily fignify his bleffing it for the use of mankind, and his ordering them to keep it holy. Thus far we can furely go. But a question will immediately be moved, relating to the time, when God bleffed and sanctified the seventh day. As to which, it feems very certain, that the time intended, was not the time when the ten commandments were deliver'd: For it is undoubted fact, that God had bleffed and fanctified the sabbath before that time; inafmuch as the ten commandments were publish'd in the third month; and the fabbath had been commanded and obferved in the middle of the fecond, Exod. Besides, XVI. I, 25. XIX. I. XX. I. fourth commandment plainly supposes, that the sabbath was instituted before that command was given: as is evident from the last words of it, which are; For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the [eventb

seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and sanctified it. The true reading is, The Lord bleffed the seventh day, &c. as appears from the Greek, Syriac, and Arabic versions of this place, and from the original passage, Gen. 11. 3. to which the fourth commandment refers. In these words of the commandment, God's bleffing and fanctifying the feventh day, is spoken of as a past fact at that time, as much as his making all things in fix days was fo. And whoever compares these words with the passage just now cited, from Gen. 11. 1, 2, 3. will find, that this is plainly refer'd to, and almost literally quoted in the fourth commandment. In both passages it is said, that God made all things in fix days; that he rested on the seventh, and that his own resting on it was the reason why be blessed and sanctified it for the use of mankind. Is it not then most natural to conclude, that the sabbath was inflituted at the time mention'd. Gen. 11. when God first rested from his works? The fourth commandment fays, that before the time of giving that commandment God bad bleffed the seventh day. To shew this, the fourth commandment refers to Gen. 11. Must not Gen. 11. then contain an account of God's fanctifying the day before the time of giving the law? But when was it, that this account fays

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says God sanctified the sabbath? To what other time can it be refer'd, but the beginning of the world? I have now proved, that it was not at the time of God's giving the law. I before shewed, that it was instituted before the time of the first raining of manna. There appears then a necessity of supposing, that the sabbath was instituted for the use of mankind as long agon as mankind was made. Every one must acknowledge, that this is the most natural interpretation of the account now cited from Genesis; and every thing else agrees hereto.

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This account of the first institution of the fabbath, Gen. 11. 3. shews for what ends it was appointed. God's bleffing and fanctifying it, plainly fignifies, that he fet it a-part from the other days of the week for some peculiar purposes. His sanctifying it, cannot mean lets than his appointing it to be imploy'd in the boly ordinances of his worship: In consequence of which it must be necessary, that men should therein rest from their works, and trades, that they might have leifure for God's folemn worship. This rest was plainly taught by the reason assign'd for the sanctifying the day, viz. because therein God rested from bis works. This was a sufficient hint, that men should also therein, after God's example, rest from their works

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works. To what end should they rest from their works? Can it be thought, that God would require it merely for the fake of the rest itself? Is it not most natural to think, that God required this reft, that fo men might have leifure, and opportunities to ingage in God's folemn worship, particularly, that therein they might meditate on the works of creation, and give to God, the Creator, the glory due to his name?

In consequence of this sanctification of the fabbath in the beginning of the world, it is to be supposed, that Adam observ'd it, and that some few generations after him, at least, especially in the line of Seth, followed his example. Though it is certain, that Moses in his history makes no mention of any one's observing it, till the time of the raining the manna, when it happens to be mention'd by the bye: Yet it might have been observed in the line of Seth all along to the times of Moses, though Mojes had no particular occasion to take notice of it in his short history of the patriarchs.

Concerning the sebbath, it is farther to be noted, that it was a fign between God and the Jews, that he was their God, and they bis people. Exod. xxx1. 13, 16, 17. Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep; for it is a fign between me, and you, throughout your gene-

generations, that ye may know, that I the Lord do sanctify you. - Wherefore the chil. dren of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to ob. serve the sabbath throughout their genera. tions, for a perpetual covenant. It is a fign between me and the children of Ifrae for ever. The meaning of which feems plainly to be this; That as the fabbath was appointed in memory of God's having f. nish'd the work of creation in fix days, and of his having rested on the seventh: so the Jews, by observing this sabbath, did testing their belief in the Creator of heaven and earth, and profess themselves to be the fervants and worshipers of the true God, in opposition to the idols, who made not the heaven and earth. At the same time the idolatrous nation of Egypt, from which the I/raelites were deliver'd, and the other idolatrous nations that lived around them; these idolaters, I say, had renounced the worship of the true God, and so would not observe his sabbath. The observation of the fabbath therefore, was a fign that men were not idolaters, but worshipers of the true God. I cannot infer from hence, with Dr. Spencer (de Legg. Hebb. lib. 1 cap. 4. sect. 7, &c.) that the sabbath was appointed only for the Jews. As it was ap pointed at the beginning of the world, " feems to have been appointed for all mankind. And it would equally ferve for a fign

the TEN COMMANDMENTS. 115 fign between God, and any other nation, as between God and the Jews, provided any other nation had kept the fabbath. That other nation would hereby have been as much proved by this fign to be worshipers of the true God, and as much distinguish'd from their idolatrous neighbours, as the Jews hereby were. But the truth is, all other nations had forsaken the worship of God, and apostatized to idolatry, and only the Jewish nation adhered to him. To be a standing evidence that they did adhere to him, he order'd them to continue to observe the sabbath; from the obfervation of which, other nations were gone aftray; the folemn worship of God on which day, would more strongly be a fign that they were not idolaters, than their mere resting from their labours could The confideration of this, makes me wonder, that Dr. Spencer should say, " Since the law of Mojes is to very careful " about the rest of the sabbath, and about " celebrating it only on the seventh day, it " may be clearly infer'd from hence, that " the Jewish sabbath was instituted, not so " much for the fake of religious worship, " as to be an external fign to all men of " the truth of the history of the creation, " and a fign whereby a worshiper of the " true God might be distinguish'd from " the profane and idolatrous." Lib. 1. c. 4. lect. 9. 1 2

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feet. 9. ad fin. I am sure the religious wor. ship of the true God, perform'd on the Sabbath by the Jews, would not at all binder its being a fign to distinguish them from idolaters. And 'tis as certain, that the publick worship of God on the sabbath, would make the fign much more evident and plain, than a mere rest from labour could do. If resting on the sabbath, and not worshiping idols, would distinguish them from idolaters, certainly their also actually ingaging in the publick worship of the true God would yet more plainly, and evidently distinguish them. And, perhaps, from God's calling the fabbath a fign, we may infer the very contrary to what the doctor would. The doctor owns, that the sabbath was a fign to distinguish a worshiper of the true God from the profane, as well as the idolatrous. But, a mere rest from worldly labour, would not prove a man to be a worshiper of the true God, or of any God at all. So that if a neighbour had come among the Israelites, and found, they only interrupted their work on the fabbath, and did not perform any divine worship, he could not indeed take them to be idolaters, but he would look upon them as profane atheists; who, while they pretended to keep the fabbath in remembrance of God's creating the world, had really no other than a politic view in it;

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it; which, for self ends, they cover'd over with a shew of religion. If then they were, by keeping the sabbath, to distinguish themselves from profane men, as well as from idolaters, it was necessary they should spend some part of the day in the worship of God: which, I make no doubt, the pious men among them did, in every age, as the doctor afterwards owns, sect. 10. in the third answer to the third objection, p. 55.

Dr. Spencer would argue, that the fabbath was given only to the Jews, from the force of the word, given, Ezek. xx. 10, 11, 12. I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wildernejs: and I gave them my statutes, and shewed them my judgments - Moreover also, I gave them my sabbaths. " Thefe " words, fays he, clearly teach, that " the ritual statutes, and sabbaths, were " given together; and that both recei-" ved their first sanction and original in " the wilderness; and laws are not said " to be given, when they are renewed, but " when they are first promulged." Sect. 9. p. 47. This criticism is easily confuted, even from this very text it felf; in which laws are faid to be given, which were only renewed, and which had been promulged long before. Among the ritual statutes which God here says he gave them in the

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wilderness, circumcision was undoubtedly Yet circumcifion was not first ordained in the wilderness, but for four hundred and thirty years before, in the time of Abraham. In this same sense has our Saviour used the word, gave, John, VII. 22. Moses gave unto you circumcision, not that it is of Moses [originally] but of the fathers. According to our Saviour then, as well as the prophet Ezekiel, laws may be said to have been given, when they were renewed, though they had been promulgated long before. The doctor also argues from the expression of making known the sabbath, Nehem. 1x. 14. Thou gavest them - commandments, and madest known unto them thy holy sabbath. Upon this the doctor fays, that "Laws are not faid tobe " made known when they are renew'd, but " when they are first promulged." This observation is overthrown by the other text, which, on this same occasion, he cites from Ezekiel, just now repeated; wherein God fays, I shew'd them my judgments, or, I made known my judgments to them, where the Hebrew word is the same as that in Nebemiah. But among these judgments which God made known to them by Moses, circumcision was one Yet the law of circumcision was not then first promulged, but was only renew'd.

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From the nature of the rest, the doctor argues, that the fabbath was not appointed for religious worship, even because this rest was imposed, not only on men, but also upon beasts, and upon the fruits of the earth. Sect. 8. ad fin. Whereas the plain truth is, the rest was injoin'd only on men. They were required not to labour, particularly not to gather in the fruits of the earth, nor to imploy their beafts in any work: because the beasts would not work, unless men attended them, and kept them to The command of the fabbath furely did not speak to the plants, and They might grow forbid them to work. as fast on a sabbath day, as on any other day of the week. Nor did the command speak to the beasts, which might fatigue themselves in ranging, or labouring for food, as much on a fabbath, as at any other time. What could the doctor mean therefore when he faid, that the rest was imposed on beasts and plants, as well as on men? Surely all he could mean is this, that men must not put the beasts to work, nor gather in the plants, i. e. the rest of the fabbath was imposed only on men, and not at all on beafts and plants. And fince it was imposed only on a creature capable of religion, it is most likely, the rest was appointed for this end among others, viz. That men might have leifure to at-14 tend tend on acts of religion, and the worship of God. This the doctor himself after. wards owns was the opinion of the pious Yews; and he lays down very strong rea. fons that might induce them to think fo, Sect. 10. Which reasons have been already mention'd.

Though this rest of the sabbath is not injoin'd upon us, nor does the fourth commandment at all oblige us; yet we are bound to keep holy the Lord's day; as I shall attempt to shew in the next Dis-

courfe.

The FIFTH Commandment.

Honour thy father, and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

The duty of honouring parents, here required, is eafily, and commonly, understood much better, I am sensible, than it is practised. And it is no way difficult for children themselves to perceive the reason and necessity of the duty. Children cannot but know, if they will think, that confidering the extraordinary love which their parents bear to them, and the extraordinary care they take of them, they can never honour, and love, and please them too much. But, on the other hand, let parent 1-

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parents remember, that they cannot expect honour, when they do not deserve it: nor does God require a child, in any instance, to pay an irrational honour to his parents. If his parents are Atheists, he cannot honour them as Christians: If his parents are profane, he cannot honour them as religious. If he hears them fwear, and lie, he cannot, even in his thoughts, honour them, as if they were virtuous: nor in this case can he speak of them as fuch. But a child is obliged to think as well as he can of his parents, and to conceal their faults, when they happen to come to his knowledge, except the good of the society make it necessary for him to divulge them. If parents will act wickedly and foolishly, in the fight of their child, he cannot help thinking contemptibly of them in this regard; and he must break the rules of reason, if he should not. But, at the same time, the child should honour and reverence the rightful authority which his parents have over him; and should testify his respect and gratitude, by maintaining his aged parents, if they should need, and be be able to afford them a maintenance, Matt. xv. 4, 5, 6. 1 Tim. v. 8.

As God required the Jews to honour their parents, so he made them a promise of a reward, in case they would perform this

this duty, viz. That thy days may be long upon the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee. Monsieur Le Clerc, in his note on these words, contends, that the words should be render'd and understood thus: That they [i.e. thy father and mother, by their prayers to God, for thy long life] may prolong thy days upon the land. The reason assign'd by that learned writer for this interpretation, is this, viz. Whenever ימים, is join'd with ימים, the noun is always in the accusative case. Upon turning to all the places where the word is used, by the help of Buxtorf's concordance, I believe this fact is justly represented, and consequently that the literal rendring of the paffage, is that which Le Clerc has given, viz. That they may prolong thy days. But still, it is not easy to allow, that the word, they, should here fignify, the parents. This manner of speaking in the English language, would naturally imply what Le Clerc thinks it does. But in the Hebrew language, it does not necessarily imply any fuch thing, but only fignified, that their days should be prolong'd by some means or other, without thinking what the particular means should be. This may certainly be learn'd from some of the very instances to which Le Clerc refers us. Thus when it is faid, John xxIV. 31. that the elders prolong'd their days after Joshua, there

there is no room to fay, that they themselves were the causes or procurers of the length of their days; but all the meaning is, that they overlived Josbua, as our tranflation has well expressed it. The same expression is repeated, Judg. 11. 7. on which latter text Le Clerc observes, that the Hebrew expression is, They prolong'd their days; and yet he does not fay, that hereby is fignified, that they prolong'd them by their own prayers for long life, but well renders it, They out-lived Joshua: This manner of speaking is usual in the Hebrew language, and from thence it is derived into the Greek of the New Testament. Thus Job vII. 3. the Hebrew is literally render'd, They appoint unto me wearisome nights: where Job does not mean, that his parents, or any other perfons, appointed these wearisome nights for him: but he only meant to fay, as our translators have well express'd his sense, wearisome nights are appointed to me. See also Nehem. 11. 7. Luke, v1. 38. X11. 20. XVI. 9. I Sam. XIX. 21. Elther, VIII. 7. 1 Kings, xv. 8. He slept with his fathers, and they buried bim; which furely does not fignify that his fathers buried him. I Kings, I. I, 2.

It is next to be observ'd, that this promise of a long continuance in the land of Canaan, was not made to particular persons

fons as fuch, but to the Jewish people as a body. If it had been made to particular persons as such, no good and obedient children could have died young. Whereas we have no reason to question, but that many particular children, who honour'd their parents, had not their days prolong'd in the land. Particularly Abijab, the fon of Jeroboam, died young; though God himself testified, there was good found in him toward the Lord God of Israel, and, no doubt then, towards his parents too. 1 Kings, XIV. 13. And 'tis likely, case of obedient children dying young, was as common among the Jews, as it is among us. But that this promise of a long continuance in the land of Canaan, was not made to particular persons as such, nor intended to fecure this bleffing to every one that honour'd his parents, is even demonstrable from this farther consideration, that the promise was not, and could not be fulfilled in this fense, whenever the nation of the Jews was carried captive out of their own land. God permitted the conquerors to carry away whomfoever they would; and did not, by any miraculous providence, make a distinction between the good and the bad in this regard. When the Jews were carried captive into Babylon, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, were carried away with the rest. These were

the TEN COMMANDMENTS. 125 were young men of very firong faith, and great piety; and therefore we have no room to doubt, but that they honour'd their fathers and mothers as God commanded. Yet their days were not long in the land of Canaan, which God had given them. And so, in every captivity of the Israelites, particularly in the last captivity of the ten tribes by Shalmaneser, and in the last captivity of the two tribes by Titus, there must necessarily have been many obedient children, as well as others, carried out of their own land, who died in a strange country: and in the two last captivities now mention'd, when all the people were carried away, who have been kept out of their own land for many hundreds of years together, all the obedient children, particularly, were remov'd, and all of them that were carried captives, died in strange countries. Considering then how often the Israelites were in captivity, and how many obedient children among the Israelites, have been carried captives, and died in the captivity; and how many, that were not made captives, but died in their own land, died young, one may well question whether one in ten of the obedient children among them, had his days prolong'd in the land of Canaan.

It follows then, that the promise was made to the Jewish nation as a body, and that the meaning is, that if they would obey God's commands, and particularly this of honouring their parents, he would preserve them long in their own land, and not suffer their enemies to invade, conquer, and captivate them. This feems plainly to be the most natural sense of the expression, That thy days may be long upon the Land: It does not seem so much defign'd for a promise of long life, as of a long continuance in the Land of Canaan, The defign of the promise, even from the expression, seems to be chiefly to prevent their being turn'd out of their own Land. or being made captives by their enemies. And if so, it is most natural to understand it as a promise made to the people as a body. The same expression is evidently used in this sense in other places of the law of Moses. Deut. Iv. 26. ___ Ye shall foon utterly perish from off the Land, whereunto ye go over fordan to possess it: ye shall not prolong your days upon ir, but shall utterly be destroy'd. Ver. 40. Thou Shalt keep therefore his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mays prolong thy days upon the earth (rather, upon the land) which the Lord thy God giveth thee,

the TEN COMMANDMENTS. 127 thee, for ever: See also Chap. v. 33. XXXI. 13. VI. 2. XXX. 18. XXXII. 46, 47. In the same book of Deuteronomy there is an expression parallel to this, which must be interpreted in the same manner, viz. a king's prolonging bis days in his kingdom, Deut. xvII. 20 -That he turn not afide from the commandment to the right hand, or to the left, to the end that he may prolong bis days in his kingdom; he and his children in the midst of Israel. This promise was not defigned to affure a particular king, that he should have a long life, and a long reign, but that he and his posterity should long injoy the kingdom, and not be deprived of it, either by domestic insurrections, or by foreign conquerors. In like manner, the promise in the fifth commandment must be understood to mean, that the Jews and their posterity should not be suffer'd to perish off the land of Canaan, but should have their days prolong'd in that good land from generation to generation, if they would honour their parents, according to God's command. And, in the same book of Deuteronomy, the very same promise is made to another particular Duty, Deut. xxv. 15. shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have; That thy days may be lengthen'd in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. This, I suppole,

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pose, every one will grant to be a promise made, not to a particular person, who kept just weights and measures, but to the whole nation as a body, if the nation maintain'd their character of righteous. reasonable then to suppose, that the same promise added to the fifth of the ten commandments must be understood as made to the nation as a nation, whom God in the course of his providence would preserve in their own land, without being carried into captivity, if they generally proved obedient to their parents. Agreeably to this we find, that, when God threatens the nation with being carried captive out of their own land for their fins, he particularly mentions this among others, of their not honouring their parents, Ezek. XXII. 7, 15. In thee have they fet light by father and mother—Behold, therefore ___ I will scatter thee among the heathen, and disperse thee in the countries. Because this fin was become general, as well as others, and the people would not reform, God was pleas'd to determine, that their days should not be prolong'd on the land, which he had given them, but that they should be carried captive into foreign countries, and so should be deprived of the bleffing promifed to an obedient people in the fifth commandment.

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The fame duty, as was required of the fews in the fifth commandment, is injoin'd upon us by the gospel, and upon both them, and us, and all mankind by the law of nature.

St. Paul has urged the duty upon christian children, Ephef. vi. 1-3. Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honour thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise) that it may be well with thee, and thou mayst live long on the earth. which passage it is first to be observ'd, that the apostle has pin'd down the meaning of the fifth commandment here cited to relate wholly to the duties of children towards their parents, and does not suppose that it included all relative duties. The apostle in this discourse particularly urges the relative duties of wives, busbands, children, parents, servants, and masters, in the order here observ'd. Under neither of these six heads does St. Paul quote the fifth command, excepting only under the third, where he speaks of the duties of children toward their parents. If he had thought that the fifth commandment included all the relative duties, there can be no doubt, but that judicious and accurate writer would have cited the fifth commandment in confirmation of what he had said on every relative duty; at least

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he would have fet the quotation at the beginning, or at the end of his discourse on relative duties, that the fifth com. mandment might have appear'd to have a reference to them all. But so far was the apostle from doing any thing like this that he quotes the fifth command only under the third head of relative duties, viz. the duties of children to parents: whereby the apostle has as good as told us in express words, that the fifth commandment hath no reference to any other relative duties whatfoever, but only to the duties which children owe to their parents. The duties of parents to children, the duties of masters and servants, of husbands and wives, of kings and people, of priests and Levites, were required in other places of the law of Mojes; but they were not required in the fifth commandment, which spake to none but to children only.

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If it be said, that all the relative duties are included in the fifth commandment by a parity of reason, or by analogy: I answer, it is not proper to say, they are included in it: The utmost that can be said is, that they are to be infer'd from it. When the wise governor of the world requires children to obey and honour their parents, we can from hence certainly infer that 'tis his will, that parents should be have so rationally toward their children,

the TEN COMMANDMENTS. 131 as to deserve their honour, and should give them no commands but what it is fit for them to obey. But this rule concerning parents is not included in the other relating to children, but is an intirely distinct command. The manner in which it is infer'd from the fifth commandment is this. From God's giving a command to children, we infer he has given a command to parents also; i. e. from the existence of one command given by a wife being, we infer the existence of another command intirely difinet from the former. A general command does truly include the particular in it. But one particular command cannot include another particular command. A man may as well fay, that the tentb commandment is included in the eighth, or that the feventh is included in the fixth, as suppose that the command to parents to take care of their children is included in the fifth. At which rate the ten commands might have been reduced to two, or perhaps to one: And there would, in that case, have been no more need to have added the other eight or nine commands in particular, than there is (in the opinion of those who suppose the ten commands to be a complete summary of the moral law) to add other commands to the ten, requiring other duties than what are required in the ten; which yet God hath K 2 actually

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actually done both in the law of Moses and in the gospel, and thereby shews that it was not needless.

The apostle's command, children obey your parents, is so easy to be understood, that there is no need to explain the meaning of it, even to the youngest children, that have any understanding. They soon learn, that obedience lies in doing what their parents require, and in avoiding

what their parents forbid.

St. Paul adds, children, obey your parents in the lord, whereby he limits the general expression; and teaches us, that children are not to obey the unlawful commands of their parents. These words, in the Lord, must be joined in construction with the word, children; and they signify that the apostle spoke to such children as were become christians, as were in the Lord. Christian children then are to consider, that they must obey Jesus Christ as their head, and consequently must obey their parents only so far as will not be inconsistent with the commands of Christ.

The measures of filial obedience may be discovered thus: It is the unquestionable duty of every rational creature always to act according to the rules of reason: And it is a contradiction to suppose that a rational creature should have a right to do, say, or command any wicked, or even any

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foolish and unreasonable thing. If parents then at any time require any fuch foolish and unreasonable thing, they act without authority: And the reason, why children should obey them, in cases where the children would not fin in obeying, though the parents had no right to command, does not arise from any sense of their parents authority in a case wherein they can have no authority (as no man can have an authority to trifle or play the fool) but from an apprehension, that it is better to obey their unreasonable commands than not (when that obedience would not violate any divine law) both to avoid the evil of their resentment and displeasure, and to fet an example of the most exact obedience to younger children, who are not capable of discerning, whether the parents commands be reasonable or not. In this case the children must obey their parents out of conscience toward God. Though children cannot look upon the foolish and impertinent commands of their parents as the commands of God, and therefore cannot think themselves bound in conscience to obey them as divine commands: Yet they will find themselves bound in conscience to obey these trifling commands of their parents upon other accounts, even because it is absolutely necessary to the peace of the family, that children should K_3

When the apostle laid down the rule, children, obey your parents in the Lord; he added a reason of it, saying, for this is right: By which he may well be supposed to mean, that this duty is agreeable to the

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nature of the relation between parents and children, and it is agreeable to the law which God gave to the children of I/rael

in this respect.

Children's obedience to their parents is agreeable to the nature of the relation upon two accounts, as it arises from a regard to the authority of parents, and from a principle of gratitude to them for all their unspeakable love and kindness.

The authority of parents over their children lies in a right to command them, and to inforce obedience by the dread of punishment, as well as by promises of reward; and consequently arises from two things, viz. from their having more knowledge, experience and wisdom, than their children, and from a right they have to their children as their property. Without the direction of people wifer than themselves children would soon, for want of experience, take those methods that would immediately be their ruin. They ought, therefore, to hear their parents counsel, and to follow their directions. But this superior wisdom of parents is not the only thing which gives them authority over their children; if it were, the consequence would be, that every one, who is wifer than those children, would have an authority over them; and that a stranger, K 4

who is wifer than their parents, would have a greater authority over them than their parents have; which no man will suppose. To superior wisdom in parents we must, therefore, add the property they have in their children, in order fully to make out their authority over them. It is necessary, in the nature of things, that children, from the time of their birth 'till they are fit to be intrusted to act for themselves, should be the property of some one, who should be oblig'd to provide for them all the necessaries of life, and to direct them in the way to happiness, both in this world, and in that which is to come. Nature has devolv'd this duty generally upon the parents, who consequently must have a right, not only to advise their children, but also to correct them, when they do amiss, that through fear of punishment they may be trained up in the way in which they should go. Of this the apofile speaks, Ephes. v1. 4. where he commands parents to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The word here render'd nurture, fignifies correcting them by blows, or other punishments, as the same word wardera, render'd, Heb. XII. 5, 7 — Despise not the chastning of the Lord-If ye indure chastning, God dealeth with you as with fons. The other word vedeoic, here rendered

the TEN COMMANDMENTS. dered admonition, properly fignifies correcling by words, by giving warning, &c. Thus the word is used in every other place of the New Testament, where it is to be found, which are only, I Cor. x. 11. Titus, 111. 10. Parents having a right to their children as their property, i. e. being obliged to take care of them, and having (not the least right to injure them in any one instance whatsoever, but) a right to do them all the good they possibly can, they must necessarily have a right to correct and punish them so far, and in such degrees, as is really necessary for the good of the children, and for the peace of the family.

The authority which parents have over their children must necessarily be granted to all those who stand in the room of parents, whether they are guardians appointed by the parents to educate their children, or whether they have adopted the children as their own, or undertaken the care of their education. Abraham's slaves were as much his property as his son Isaac, and therefore, he had the same authority over them as over him; and they were as much obliged to obey him as a father, as Isaac was. The same is evidently the case

where a child is adopted.

The parental authority, which arises from their superior wisdom, daily decreases

as the children improve in knowledge and experience; and intirely ceases, when the children have as much wisdom to guide themselves, as their parents have to guide them. Yet, that part of the authority of parents, which they derive from having their children their property, lasts in its full strength, as long as the children remain their property, live in the family, or are maintain'd by them. Nor can the children cease to be their parents property, or withdraw themselves from their jurisdiction, even after they are grown up, without their parents consent; except in extraordinary cases, where the parents are very unreasonable, either by the use of intolerable severity, or by denying them an opportunity of being more useful in the world than they can be in their parents family, and under their direction; or for some other very substantial reason.

From hence it follows, that when children are married out, all the authority of their parents over them intirely ceaseth. If a daughter be married, her obedience is from thenceforth due to her busband. And fince, according to our Saviour's maxim, no one can serve two masters, much less three; it is a plain case, that, if she is in subjection to the authority of her busband, she must necessarily cease to be in subjection to any authority of her parents:

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rents: Since, otherwise, she would have two, or three masters at the same time. If a son be married, and has a family of his own, he immediately ceases to be his parents property, and so is removed from their jurisdiction; being himself commenc'd a Master, and having, in his family, all the supreme and independent authority which his father hath in bis.

But though the authority of parents ceases, whenever the children rightfully cease to be their property, and their parents have then no more right to command, or correct them, than a stranger; yet, there is still a great and important duty incumbent upon them, as much as upon the youngest children. It is right and fit, that children should for ever exercise the most hearty and affectionate gratitude to their parents. They should study to requite them, to the utmost of their power, with love, respect, good humour, affistance, maintenance, and every other expression of a mind truly grateful for all their kindness, tenderness, and care. Thus the apoftle has requir'd, I Tim. v. 4. If any widow have children or nephews (i. e. grandchildren, as the word, nephews, always fignified in our language, till about three-score years agon: And, how it came to have another sense put upon it of late, I cannot imagine) let them learn first to shew piety

piety at home, and to requite their parents; for that is good, and acceptable before God. This is a duty incumbent upon children in all ages, states, and circumstances of life. They can never be freed from this

bond of gratitude.

As the obedience of children to their parents is right, because it is agreeable to the nature of the relation which subsists between them; so it is right also, because it is agreeable to the rule which God gave to the Jews in this regard. This is what the apostle particularly intended, when he cited the fifth commandment, saying, children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right: Honour thy father and mother. God's having required this of the Yews shews that it was right, right in itself, and right for the apostle to require the same of all christians. For the reason of the duty required in the fifth commandment was not taken from any thing peculiar to the Jewish nation, but from fomething common to all nations of the earth, viz. from the natural relation that subsists between parents and children. It could not then be thought, but that the fame wife and unchangeable God, who required the Jewish children in the fifth command to honour their parents, because they were their parents, would also in the commands delivered to other nations, require the TEN COMMANDMENTS. 141 quire children to honour and obey their parents, because they are their parents. The apostle, therefore, very justly cites the fifth commandment as a proof that he was right in commanding the children that were christians to obey their parents.

Moses's commanding children to bonour their parents, fignifies the same as the apostle's commanding them to obey their parents. Either of these will imply and infer the other; and neither of them can be without the other. This bonour is the fame with reverence, expressed by the word fear, Lev. XIX. 3. Ye shall fear every man bis mother, and bis father. This reverence, or honouring parents, must be maintained in thought. Children should think as little ill of their parents as is poffible. But, if parents will act foolishly, or wickedly, in the fight of their children, they cannot blame their children for thinking that they have done amiss. But, whatever parents are in their own moral conduct, still their children are obliged to honour and reverence them upon the account of the authority they have over them, and should always entertain just apprehensions of that authority. The same honour and reverence must be manifested in all their language and bebaviour.

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When the apostle cites the fifth commandment, he calls it the first commandment with promise. It has been thought difficult to account for this expression. All the commentators I have met with. tell us, that the apostle's meaning is, that this is the first commandment among the ten which has an express and particular promise added to it. See Pool's synopsis. But, according to what has been now obferved, this is not true: For the promise added to the second commandment is as express, and as particular as this. Indeed both promises were made to the nation of the Jews in general, as a nation. Besides, if this interpretation of the apostle's words were to be admitted, the apostle had no more reason to call it the sirst, than the last commandment; since there is no one after it, among the ten, that has any promise at all added to it. So that, in this way of speaking, it is natural to suppose, that the apostle would not have call'd it, the first, but, the only commandment with The apostle then had certainly another reason for calling it, the first commandment, viz. That it is the first commandmeut of the fecond table, or, the first which relates to the duties that men owe to men. This interpretation will not feem strange to any man who considers, that where-ever our Saviour and his apostles cite

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cite the decalogue in the New Testament, they constantly cite only the commands of the fecond table, and never once cite the commands of the first; as will be evident from the places themselves. Matt. XIX. 17, 18, 19 .- If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus Said, Thou Shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou halt not steal, Thou halt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self. Luke, XVIII. 20. Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother. Mark, x. 19. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother. Rom. XIII. 8, 9, 10.—He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. In this last cited text it is very plain, that the apostle had no view to cite any commands that belong'd to the first table, which respected

the duties men owe to God. For he not only does not mention any fuch, but also expresly confines himself to such laws as are comprehended under that general rule, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy felf. And, when he tays, Love is the fulfilling of the law, it is plain he means only that part of the law which requires the duties that men owe to men. In this paffage also we may observe, that the apostle does not feem to go upon the modern supposition, that the fix commandments of the fecond table comprehend all the rules that require the duties of men to men. In his general law, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy felf, he comprehends not only the laws of the second table, but all other particular laws also, which respect our duty to one another. This is yet clearer from the above citations out of the gospels. Our Saviour there expresly mentions other particular rules, which are not to be found among the ten commandments; as, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy felf, defraud not. In the same restrained sense St. James.

From these passages of the New Testament it is clear, that our Saviour and his disciples, particularly St. Paul, when they cited the decalogue, were speaking only of mens duties to one another; and, therefore, cited only those precepts of it,

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which related to the duties that men owe to one another. It is then natural to conclude, that in Ephes. vi. 2. when St. Paul calls the command to children to honour their parents by the name of the first commandment, he means the first commandment of the second table. For we have no reason to think, that he had here any more view to the commands of the first table, than he had in his epistle to the Romans, Chap. XIII. 8, 9, 10.

The apostle observes, that this first commandment of the second table had a promise added to it; whereby he would put christian children in mind, that, if God would reward the duty of obedience to parents among the fews with temporal blessings, the same unchangeable lover of virtue would reward christians with the better blessings, which the gospel has in-

couraged the obedient to expect.

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The promise added to the fifth commandment, as cited by the apostle, is in these words, That it may be well with thee, and thou mayst live long on the earth. As to which it must first be observed, that it ought to be rendered, on the land, meaning the land of Judæa. And in the next place we are to take notice, that this promise, as cited by the apostle, is not expressed in the same words as it is in the Hebrew copy of the fifth commandment

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in Exodus, where that clause is not to be found, That it may be well with thee; but he makes the citation from Deuteronomy, where are to be found the very words that the apostle has cited. And our translators might have used the same words in both places, if they had pleased. Indeed, in Deuteronomy, the two clauses stand thus. That thou mayst live long, and that it may be well with thee upon the land. This order is observ'd in the Hebrew, Samaritan. Syriac, Arabic and Latin. But the LXX, and St. Paul, have put the clauses in another order, thus, That it may be well with thee, and that thou mayst live long on the land. The difference is no way material, and the quotation is exact enough. And, perhaps, this reading of the LXX, and St. Paul, is the true original reading of the place. From hence it appears, that our translators should have used the word land (not earth) in rendring the apostle's words. The whole promise is, That it may be well with thee, and that thou mayst live long on the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. The apostle, for brevity's fake, left out the last clause; still leaving us to conclude, that he spake of no other land than what the commandment did, even the land of Canaan.

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The SIXTH Commandment.

Thou Shalt not kill.

The Hebrew word רצה, here render'd kill. fignifies differently in different places. Sometimes it fignifies putting men to death in a lawful way, as a punishment for their crimes, as Num. xxxv. 27-30. If the avenger of blood kill, רצח, the flayer,___ The murderer (hall be put to death, Hebrew, shall be kill'd, ירצה. Sometimes the word fignifies killing a man by chance, as in the same Chapter, ver. 11, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28. Ye shall appoint you cities of refuge, that the flayer, ny, may flee thither which killeth any person at unawares-If be thrust him suddenly without enmity, or have cast upon him any thing without laying of wait, or with any stone wherewith a man may die, seeing him not, and cast it upon him that he die, and was not his enemy, neither fought his harm; then the congregation shall judge -- and -- shall deliver the flayer, nyn. But if the flayer, רצח, come ____ the revenger of blood kill the flayer, רצח —the flayer, רצח, shall return. This law speaks of nothing but what we call chance-medley, as is plain from the parallel account of the same L 2

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blood, should be oblig'd to run to one of

the cities of refuge, and be confin'd there-

in till the death of the high priest. Which

punishment was not too severe, in order to make men very cautious, that they run

no hazard of killing one another.

In other places the Hebrew word הצח, fignifies what we call murder, as in Numb. xxxv. 16. If he smite him with an instrument of iron (so that he die) he is a murderer הצח, the murderer, הצח, shall surely be put to death. See also, ver. 17, 18, 19, 21, 30, 31. In all which places the word is used to signify a murderer, as distinguish'd from one that kills another by

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chance; though this latter is fignified by the same Hebrew word in other verses of

this chapter before-cited.

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These three are all the senses, in which the Hebrew word is used, in all the Old Testament. It is not to be taken in the first of these senses in the fixth commandment, as is obvious at the first fight. the second sense it cannot be taken, strictly speaking; fince the ordering men not to kill one another by chance, or by any unforeseen accident, is no proper way of speaking. Though, at the same time, God cannot but require, that we should be very cautious and circumspect in all our behaviour and actions, and guard against all accidents as much as possible. This fixth commandment then forbids murder, or the taking away any man's life unjustly, either in cold blood, or in a heat of paffion; the taking away any man's life without authority, or without necessity.

The unchangeable God has, by the gospel, forbidden the same sin, I Pet. IV. 15. I Tim. I. 9. And has threaten'd them that are guilty of it with eternal damnation, I Job. III. 15. Gal. v. 21. Rev. xxI. 8. xXII. 15. And God has order'd all mankind, in the precept he gave to Noab, to punish the murderer with death, Gen. Ix. 5, 6. Whoso sheddeth L 2 man's

150 An Exposition of man's blood, by man shall his blood be

Ibed.

I cannot conclude this subject without bearing my testimony against the Alexanders and Cæsars of the earth, as some of the most wicked and odious of men, who delighted in shedding the blood of millions, only for the fake of getting a name among men as wicked as themselves. worse again than these monsters are the eldest sons of Satan, the inquisitors and perfecutors, who impiously murder their better brethren; for this very reason, because they are better than themselves; because they fear God, and had rather die the most tormenting death than break his holy commandments. Surely, as there is a hell to punish sinners, these persecutors must, without hearty repentance, be cast into the bottest place of the lake that burns with fire and brimstone for ever and ever.

The SEVENTH Commandment.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

God, in the law of Moses, expressly forbad all other kinds of uncleanness as well as adultery, such as fornication, incest, unnatural lusts, beastiality, and the like. But,

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the TEN COMMANDMENTS. 151 in this feventh commandment, he only farbad adultery, when either both, or one of the persons was married. This is plain from the use of the Hebrew word in other places, Lev. xx. 10. The man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer, and the adulteress shall surely be put to death. Prov. vi. 32, 34. Whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding, &c. Now, that the wife man means a woman that has a busband, is evident from his adding, For jealousy is the rage of a man, &c. viz. of the adulteresses husband. Ezek. xvI. 32. A wife that committeth adultery, who taketh strangers instead of ber busband, Hosea, 11. 2.

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Answerably we find, that the Greek word, which is used as the proper rendring of the seventh commandment in the New Testament, always there signifies what, in our language, is properly call'd adultery. Matt. v. 32. Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for whoredom, causeth her to commit adultery (she being still rightfully his wife) and whosoever marrieth her that is put away, committeth adultery; because he lives with another man's wife. See also, Matt. xix. 9. Rom. VII. 3. where the person said to be guilty of adultery, is expressly said to be in a mar-

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of the law of Moses.

Before I leave this head, I would just take occasion to observe, that many great men have made a wrong distinction between the meanings of the words Moixeia, and These words, indeed, have different senses; but it has been a great mistake to think, that the latter of them denotes the same idea as our English word fornication, by which our translators have always render'd it. The Greek word plainly fignifies all kinds of unlawful conversation of men and women; including adultery, when one or both are married; fornication, when neither is married; incest, when the persons are two nearly related. Thus a married woman, Matt. v. xix. 9. is said to be guilty of Hogvera, which

the TEN COMMANDMENTS. 153 which our translators have render'd fornication, though her crime is really adultery. Accordingly Hogveia, and Moixeia, are used to fignify the same thing, Rev. II. 21, 22. I gave her space to repent of her Hogveiz; i. e. whoredom—and them who commit adultery with her. A man, that has his father's wife, and so is guilty of incest, is said to be guilty of mogresa, 1 Cor. v. 1. It is reported commonly, that there is woovera, fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have bis father's wife. In this place it is exceedingly evident, that the word woevera, must not be restrain'd to signify the sin we now call fornication; but must be understood to mean in general any unlawful conjunction, whereof incest is one. The apostle cannot be thought to mean, that fornication was not nam'd among the Gentiles; for it was very common. But what he fays is this, that there are various forts of woevera, one fort of which, viz. A man's having his father's wife, was not heard of among the Gentiles, who yet gave themselves up to fornication. word woem, fignifies a common strumpet, Rev. xvII. I, 2.—I will Shew thee the judgment of the great whore, woemswith whom the kings of the earth, επορνευgav, have committed whoredom, and the inha-

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a, ch inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her, woevera, whoredom. Chap. XVIII. 3. All nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her, moevera, whoredom; and the kings of the earth have committed whoredom, ETTOPVEUoav, with her. Hosea, 111. 3. Thou shalt abide for me many days, thou shalt not play the harlot, soeverons, and thou shalt not be for another man. From all these places compared together, it is very plain, that mogveia is a general word, including under it all kinds of unlawful conjunction; and so ought not to have been render'd fornication, as it is constantly by our translators, unless the word fornication, in their days, was understood in a sense different from that which it is now appropriated to fignify. We have hardly an English word that stands for exactly the same ideas as the Greek word wogveiz. The nearest I can think of is whoredom. But to return.

That the feventh commandment forbids nothing but adultery, is plain from what our Saviour fays of it, Matt. v. 27, 28. Ye have heard, that it hath been said to them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say to you, that whosever looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. Where our Saviour certainly

the TEN COMMANDMENTS. 155 certainly speaks of a married woman, or a wife, as is plain, both because it is very far from being unlawful for an unmarried man to defire to have a particular unmarried woman to become his wife; and because the lusting after a woman here condemn'd, is expresly call'd adultery. Our Saviour then plainly confined the feventh commandment to the fin of adultery. Besides, if we permit Moses to interpret his own laws, the thing will be as evident. It was order'd in the law, that adultery should be punish'd with death, Lev. xx. 10. But fornication was not to be punish'd with death, Exod. XXII. 16, 17. The particular fin then which is forbidden to the Jews in the feventh commandment was adultery, as distinguished from fornication. The fin which the seventh commandment forbids was, by the same law, declared to be a capital crime. But fornication was not made capital by that law; therefore fornication, which was strictly forbidden in other places of the law, was not forbidden under the word that fignifies a capital crime in the seventh commandment. And, how it could ever enter into mens heads to imagine, that, under the word adultery (which necessarily suggests the ideas of a man and a woman) should be comprehended unnatural lusts, and beastiality, is inconceiv-

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able. It is true, he that has forbidden that, has also forbidden these, under the same tremendous penalty. But a man may as well say, that adultery is forbidden by the third commandment, as that beastia-

lity is forbidden by the seventh.

I need not add, because every one knows it, that the holy gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ has forbidden all kinds of lewdness, adultery, fornication, unnatural lusts, &c. under the most awful penalties of everlasting damnation, Gal. v. 19, &c. Rev. xxi. 8.

The EIGHTH Commandment.

Thou Shalt not steal.

In this command God forbids the Jews that particular kind of injustice, which, in our language, is properly and strictly call'd stealing, or thest; as will be evident by comparing herewith other passages of the same law, wherein the sin is particularly described, and the punishment of it settled. The punishment in most cases was a restitution of sour or sive times the value of what was stollen; but, if the thief was not capable of making such restitution, he was to be sold for a slave, as it is written, Exod. xxII. 1—4. If a man shall steal (222, the same word as is used in the

the TEN COMMANDMENTS. 157 the eighth commandment) an ox, or a sheep, and kill it, or sell it; be shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a [heep. If a thief be found breaking up [a house] and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him. If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him; for he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft. If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep, be shall restore double. Chap. xx1. 16. He that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death. Deut. XXIV. 7. If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and maketh merchandize of him, or selleth him; then that thief shall die. These texts plainly shew in what sense the words thief, and stealing, are used in the Jewish law; and consequently, in what sense the eighth commandment is to be understood. As there is no place in all that law, where the word flealing is used to fignify all kinds of injustice, there can be no reason to suppose, that it is used in this general sense in the eighth commandment. And forasmuch as the words stealing, and theft, are expresly defined by Moses in the last cited texts to fignify, that one particular kind of injustice injustice which lies in a man's taking away from others what is their property; it must be determin'd, that the word stealing is to be understood in the same sense in the

eighth commandment.

There are other kinds of injustice befides this; as keeping back the wages of
an hired servant too long, even when there
is no design of detaining them for ever
(which the Mosaic law would not call
stealing, nor punish as such) false weights
and measures; rendring our neighbour's
beast, or instruments of labour, unsit tor
that work in which he uses to imploy
them; and many more. These instances
of injustice were, indeed, forbidden by
the law of Moses, but not in the eighth
commandment.

Upon this occasion one cannot but obferve, that there are many instances of
immorality forbidden by the law of nature, by the law of Moses, and by the gospel, which cannot be reduc'd to any one
of the ten commands. We will suppose
a poor man gets his living by a horse; and
that some one in a mere frolick shoots that
horse in the field, where it is grasing:
Surely no one will say, that he stole the
horse; nor would any jury in England sind
him guilty of thest. Nor is this instance
of injustice, towards his neighbour, a sin
against

the TEN COMMANDMENTS. 159 against any one of the ten commandments, though really a sin against another law of God.

Besides, that the eighth commandment was never intended to forbid all kinds of injustice, and that, having forbid stealing, it lest other kinds of injustice to be forbidden by other particular laws, is clear from hence, that, when our Saviour repeats the commands of the second table, he adds to them this commandment also, defraud not, Mark, x. 19. This, it cannot be thought our Saviour would have done, if the eighth commandment had comprehended all instances of defrauding

and injustice.

All these kinds of fraud, and injustice, and particularly thest, or stealing, are forbidden in the New Testament, in various places, upon pain of the divine vengeance in the world to come, I Pet. IV. 15. Ephes. IV. 28. I Tim. I. 10, II. I Cor. VI. 9, 10. James, v. 4. And the scripture has, particularly, insisted upon the necessity of making restitution, when it is in our power, Ezek. XXXIII. 14, 15, 16. I shall only add, that a man may as soon expect to be saved without prayer, or even without the mediation of Christ, as without justice and honesty in all his dealings with all men, with whom he has to do.

The NINTH commandment.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

This commandment, particularly, related to mens giving evidence before a magistrate, as it is explain'd in the law of Moses, which, at the same time, settled the punishment of this fin, Deut. XIX. 16-19. If a false witness rise up against any man to testify against bim that which is wrong; then both the men between whom the controversy is, shall stand before the Lord, before the priests, and the judges which shall be in those days; and the judges shall make diligent inquisition, and behold, if the witness be a false witness, and bath testified falfly against his brother; then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done to his brother. The reasons of this law are obvious to every man. And no one can question, but that a man bears false witness against his neighbour, in a court of justice, how much soever his false evidence is in favour of him who stands upon his trial. For his bearing false witness for one fide, is really, and in the exactest sense, bearing false witness against the other; inafmuch as there are always two parties concern'd in every tryal, either **fubject**

the TEN COMMANDMENTS. 161 subject and subject, or subject and sove-

reign.

Our divine Saviour has condemn'd the fame fin, by faying, Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts - False witness, speaking evil of others; these are the things which defile a man, Matt. xv. 19, 20. And every commandment of the gospel, which prohibits lying in general, does particularly forbid this fort of lying. Lying includes false witness; but it must be obferved on the other hand, that bearing false witness does not include lying under it, as one kind of bearing false witness. Innumerable lyes may be told, which cannot be look'd upon as a man's bearing false witness against bis neighbour. If a man should come and tell me, that last night he saw a comet, when really he saw no fuch thing; he would be guilty of a great fin against the law of God: And yet, this would be no more a breach of the ninth commandment, than it is of the eighth. Nay, a man might as well fay, this lye is a kind of adultery, as to fay, that it is a kind of bearing false witness against one's neighbour.

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The TENTH Commandment.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

The coveting here forbidden, is a defire to have, as our own, what belongs to our neighbour, to his loss, or damage, or without his consent. It is no harm to desire a neighbour to sell me his house for the real value of it; but it is evil to desire, and wish to have the house to his prejudice, and by means of injustice, or violence.

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The coveting another man's wife here forbidden, is not a defire to commit adultery with her while the remains another man's wife (though this defire was forbidden also, and is adultery in the fight of God) but defiring that the may cease to be bis wife, and become the wife of him, who covets her. There were two ways among the Jews, by either of which this might be brought about, viz. a divorce, or the death of the husband: So that whofoever did then fin against this tenth command in this instance, and did covet his neighbour's wife, or defire to have her for a wife to himself, did thereby really defire,

the TEN COMMANDMENTS. 163 fire, either that she would divorce her husband, or else wish that her husband was dead: For, unless the husband were dead, or divorced, he, that coveted the wife, could not hope to injoy her as his own. The plain reason why God forbid this covering was, because he, that allow'd himself to wish, or defire that another man were divorced from his wife, in order to his own marrying her, would not flick to use any base arts in order to ingage and affist the woman to fue out a divorce. And he that allows himself to defire the death of any man, in order to take the widow to himfelf, will not be able to refift the temptation of killing him, when he shall think he has an opportunity of doing it with fafety, and without fear of punishment. Witness the case of David and Uriah.

This sense, which is here given of the prohibition of coveting our neighbour's wife, is consirm'd to be the only true one by the rest of the particulars mention'd in the command. Coveting my neighbour's house, evidently signifies wishing that it may cease to be his house and property; and become my house and property: Coveting his servants, is not wishing that they would now and then serve me, while they remain his servants, but that they would cease to be his servants intirely, and for the suture stand in that relation to me.

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In like manner, the coveting another man's wife, is desiring she may be intirely deliver'd from her former husband, and be-

come my wife.

The reason why God prohibits the coveting our neighbour's house, slaves, and cattle is, because, if this coveting be indulged, it will unavoidably put us upon using any unrighteous methods, in order to the getting these things into our posses-Whereas, there can be no such evil consequence in my desiring to buy any thing of my neighbour, with his consent. If I defire to buy my neighbour's bullock, I may go and do it, if he consents; and so fatisfy my defire. If he will not part with it, still I am /atisfied; because it was not my defire to have it without his confent, but only in case he should consent. And a defire to have it only with his consent, can never put me upon any methods of taking it away without his consent. But, if a man defires to become possessor of the properties of his neighbours, right or wrong, whether they are willing to dispose of them, or not, he then fins, and lays himself open to violent temptations of stealing those things which he thus covets, or of feizing them by force, if he can have an opportunity for it, and of feeking occafions too.

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This fin of coveting, by what has been already faid, appears to be a fin against the light of nature, and consequently to be forbidden to all mankind. And on the fame account it is forbidden in the New Testament, where Christ says to his disciples, Take beed, and beware of covetoufne/s, Luke, XII. 15. in which words our Saviour condemns the desiring an abundance of the things of this world; for this reason among others, we may suppose, viz. because an eager thirst after an abundance of wealth, will almost necessarily lead men unlawfully to defire what is their neighbours, in order to increase their own stock. St. Paul has given us the like prohibition, Heb. XIII. 5. Let your conversation be without coverousness, and be content with such things as ye have: by which last expresfion the apostle directly forbids us to covet fuch things as belong to our neighbour.

The interpretation here given of the ten commandments, is such, I am persuaded, as any commentator upon any buman book of laws would have given of the same precepts, if they had been therein deliver'd. They must be consider'd as expressed in plain language, and be interpreted according to the common meaning of the words.

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Discourse II. Of the Lord's Day.

Have formerly shew'd in another discourse, (Vol. I. Disc. VIII.) that the fourth commandment does not oblige Christians to observe the sabbath day; and have now in the exposition given of that commandment, proved, that the Jabbath day thereby appointed, is (not what day of the week the Jews should please to appoint, but) the feventh day of the week, or the Suturday. From whence it plainly follows, that we cannot derive the Institution of the Lord's day from the fourth commandment. Yet it is needful to enquire, whether there is not some other day appointed by the gospel, for the performance of publick worship, which Christians are obliged peculiarly to imploy in the fervice of God? And here, at first fight, it is most natural to suppose, that when God declared us free from an obligation

to observe the sabbatb, he did not intend to allow us to spend every day without interruption, in the works of our trades and worldly callings, or give us a license, wholly to neglect his public worship; but that as he required the Jews to keep holy one day in seven, and to give their servants and cattle rest therein; so he would have us allow our fervants and cattle an equal portion of rest, that they may not be tired to death by constant and uninterrupted labour, and oblige us to spend some day or other, now and then, in acts of religious, public worship. It is not possible for any Christian to think, that there is no occasion at all for public worship; or that there is no need for us to celebrate it as often as the Jews were required by the fourth commandment to do fo. Without all question, God deserves as much regard, love, and homage from us, as from the Jews. He deliver'd them from Egypt, from the house of bondage. But he has wrought out for us an infinitely greater salvation by his Son Jesus Christ. It can never then be thought, that we should be left at liberty to worship God seldomer than the Yews were obliged to do. It is therefore natural to think, that he would have us worship him in publick, at least, once in a week, and to observe some other day instead of the fabbath.

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These considerations make it reasonable to expect, that God would appoint some day or other for publick worship among Christians; and dispose us to perceive the evidence there is from the New Testament to shew, that it is the will of God, we should

observe the Lord's day.

The first evidence of this that shall be mention'd, is the name or title that it bears, viz. The Lord's day. It is thus ftiled by St. John, Rev. 1. 10. where he fays; I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. The reader will please to observe, that I do not found the argument, in any, the least respect whatsoever, on those words, I was in the Spirit: for, I am sensible, they only signify, that St. John was, at that time, favour'd with an extraordinary revelation, by the Spirit of God. I only argue from the title, The Lord's day. With regard to which, it is obvious to observe, at the first fight, that it is one particular day of the week, distinguish'd from the rest by this title. And that it was the first day of the week is plain; because the first Christians, who lived next after the apostles, constantly, and with one harmonious voice, use this title to fignify the first day of the week. There was never any writer in ancient ages, that called the fabbath by the name of the Lord's day. Nay, the oldest writers of the Christian church, tell us, that the Lord's

Lord's day is the day on which Christ rose from the dead, which we know to be the first day of the week, Mark, xv1. 9. And farther, they expresly distinguish the Lord's day from the fabbath, by faying, That we are to neglect the one, and to observe the other. Ignatius (A. D. 101.) in his epistle to the Magnefians, says; " Let us not " keep the fabbath after the manner of " the Jews, but spiritually. And after " having thus kept the fabbath; let every " Christian celebrate the Lord's day, the " day of Christ's resurrection." Chap. IX. The smaller edition agrees exactly hereto. Clement of Alexandria (A. D. 192.) fays; " A Christian, according to the command " of the gospel, observes the Lord's day, " when he lays afide evil thoughts, and " receives fuch as are agreeable to know-" ledge, thereby glorifying the refurre-" ction of the Lord." Strom. VII. p. 744. This evidently implies, that the Lord's day was not the fabbath, but the day on which Christ rose from the dead. Accordingly he says in another place, The Lord's day is the eighth day. Strom.v. p. 600. Tertullian (A. D. 192.) fays; "We have nothing " to do with the fabbath: the Lord's day " is the Christian solemnity." De Idololat. Chap. xiv. (yprian, and fixty five other bishops (A. D. 253.) in a letter to Fidus, relating to infant-baptism, says; That the

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It is next to be inquired, Wby it is called, The Lord's day? The first occasion of its being so called was, that Christ, our Lord, rose from the dead on this first day of the week, Mark, xvi. 1, 2, 9. And the title it self, The Lord's day, signifies, that it is a day, which Christians are to obferve for the bonour, and in the fervice of the Lord Jesus Christ. The title distinguishes it from the other days of the week. But how can one day of the week be the Lord's, in a peculiar and distinguishing manner? Are not all the days of the week the Lord's? Do we not receive all our time from him? Ought we not, in every day, to imploy our felves in the works which the Lord Jesus, under God, has given us to do? Do we not really spend the fix common mon days of the week in the fervice of the Lord, when we labour with bonest induftry in our callings, and therein fincerely intend to do his will, and aim at his glory? Why then should one of the days of the week be distinguished from the rest, by being called, The Lord's day? How can it be peculiarly the Lord's, above the rest, but by being spent in a manner different from the other days of the week, not in our worldly callings, but in the exercises of religious worship; which more directly and immediately tend to the honour of our Lord Jesus Christ, than our worldly labours can do? Industry, honesty, and faithfulness in our callings, do not prove us to be Christians: since we might behave in this manner merely from a regard to natural religion. But we profess our felves to be Christians, if we spend a day of every week in the peculiar service of Christ. And for this reason it is more bis day than any other day of the week.

In order the more fully to establish what has been said concerning the meaning of the title, The Lord's day, it will be needful to compare it with parallel expressions. From our own suppers, a certain supper is distinguish'd by being call'd, The Lord's supper, I Cor. XI. 20, 21. Our own suppers are such as have no immediate relation to Christ; but such as we should

make,

make, whether we are Christians or not, in order to support and refresh our bodies. The other then is called, The Lord's supper, to distinguish it from our own; because it is appointed, and must be celebrated in remembrance of Christ, and for bis immediate bonour. And the title feems farther to fignify, that this supper was (as we know, in fact, it was) instituted by Christ. The apostle speaks of the Lord's cup, 1 Cor. x1. 27. by which he evidently means, that the Lord instituted this cup, or order'd it to be used at his supper. Lord's sabbath, Lev. xxIII. 3. unquestionably fignifies, that the Lord appointed that day to be observed for his honour. There is a prayer, which we properly call, The Lord's prayer, to distinguish it from prayers composed by men, and to fignify that it was appointed by the Lord himself. The apostles of the Lord are, by this title, distinguish'd from mens messengers; and shewn to be appointed by the Lord himself. The church of the Lord is a church devoted to bis service, and erected by bim. people of the Lord are, by this title, distinguish'd from the rest of the world; and are thereby fignified to be chosen by him, and devoted to his service. In correspondence to these parallel expressions, is it not necessary to determine, that the title, The Lord's day, fignifies, that that day is chosen

chosen, instituted and appointed by the Lord, to be imploy'd in a peculiar manner

in bis fervice, and to bis bonour?

To this it cannot reasonably be objected, that if Christ had instituted this day, we should have read of its institution in the gospels. For we are fure, that Christ and his disciples baptised many Jews in his life time, John III. 22. Iv. 1, 2. Yet the evangelists do not give us any account of the institution of this baptism. The institution we read of, Matt. xxvIII. 19. was of baptism for the nations, or the Gentiles, long after the forementioned practice of Christian baptism for the Jews, that believed in Christ. So the Lord's day may be a divine institution, tho' we have not in the gospel, an account of the particular time, when it was first appointed. It is natural enough to suppose it was after Christ's resurrection, when he spake to his apostles of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, Acts 1. 3.

We are farther to observe, that nature teaches us, that some time or other, should be set apart for the public worship of God; and that Christ has instituted public worship. He has commanded his disciples to meet together in the church to celebrate the Lord's supper, in commemoration of his death; and continue to do so, till be shall come, I Cor. XI. 26. i. e. till he shall come to judgment, as the apostle explains

his

his own expression, in this same epistle, Chap. Iv. 5. And that this ordinance is to be celebrated (not in a fick man's bedchamber, but) in publick, in the church, where Christians are met together for common worship, is plain from the apofile's faying; What! have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God? If any man bunger, let bim eat at home, that ye may come not together unto condemnation, ver. 22, 34. This ordinance of the Lord's supper, must always be attended with prayers. For, in the first institution and celebration of it, Christ blesfed, or gave thanks to God, ver. 24. herein fetting us an example. And the first Christians followed this example, and continued stedfastly in communion together, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers, Acts 11. 42. never separating these things from one another. And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them; and hereby has directed us to give an exhortation to the people, when we meet together to break bread in remembrance of Christ, Acts, xx. 7. XI. 1, 16. And Christ set us an example of finging at the same time, Matt. xxvi. 30. Since then Christ has instituted publick worship (even his supper, and the thanksgivings, and prayers, and finging that must

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must attend it) and has required his disciples to perform it in all ages: it is natural to ask, When must it be perform'd? When should the Lord's supper be celebrated, but on the Lord's day? The Lord's supper (or public worship) and the Lord's day, wonderfully agree, and appear to be ordain'd for each other, the worship for the day, and the day for the worship. Here is public worship appointed by Christ, which must be performed on some stated day. Here is a day called by the apostle, The Lord's day. Put these two things together: and is it not evident, that the day is defign'd for the worship? Is not the Lord's day, by its name, distinguish'd from the other days of the week, as the Lord's, in a sense wherein the other fix days are not? Must it not then be spent as the Lord's? And how can we do this better than by celebrating the Lord's supper on it, and by joining in communion in breaking of bread, and in prayers? By this means, Christians will truly distinguish it from their fix days of labour; as its name requires they should do. This comparing of the Lord's supper, and the Lord's day, or public worship instituted, and a day called the Lord's, to fignify that it must be imploy'd in public worship, is almost, if not absolutely, a demonstration of the divine institution of the Lord's day. The

The reader will please to take notice, by the way, that I have not been able to prove the divine institution of public Christian worship, otherwise than by proving the divine institution of the Lord's supper; nor do I apprehend, that it is possible to prove it from scripture in any other way. We cannot then prove from the New Testament, that any public worship at all must be perform'd on the Lord's day, without proving that the Lord's Supper must be then administer'd. From whence it follows, that the Lord's supper, with the prayers, thanksgivings, and finging, which must always attend it, is the public Christian worship; and that therefore Christians are now much deviated from the truth, while they celebrate public worship without the Lord's supper. But to return:

We may farther confirm the divine institution of the Lord's day, from the confideration of what St. Luke says, Acts, xx. 7. Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them. In order to wrest this text out of our hands, some weak people have pretended, that it is not certain St. Luke here speaks of the first day of the week. They critically observe, that the Greek phrase should be literally render'd, thus; Upon the One of the sabbaths; and

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fo make the passage absolutely unintelligible! The plain truth is, that this phrase is used in other places, where it most unquestionably signifies, The first day of the week; as Matt. XXVIII. I. Mark, XVI. 2. (where μια σαββαίων is the same as πρωίν σαββαίς, ver. 9.) Luke, XXIV. I. John XX. I. Every one of the evangelists uses the same phrase to signify the first day of the week, and never use it in any other sense. St. Luke in his gospel thus uses it: There can be no room then to scruple giving the same sense to it, when he uses it in his account of the Asts of the Apostles.

However odd the phrase may seem at first fight, it is not difficult to account for For the word sabbath, in Greek, fignifies two things; fometimes, and most usually, the seventh day of the week; at other times the whole week. Thus it plainly does, Luke, XVIII. 12. where what our translators have well and rightly render'd, I fast twice in the week, is in the original, I fast twice in the sabbath. It is evident, the word sabbath, in this place, does not fignify one fingle day; because it is impossible for a man to fast twice in one and the same day, but the whole week; during which, a man might fast twice, or find two days to fast in. In like manner, in all those places just before cited, in which the four evangelists speak of Christ's

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rifing on the first day of the sabbath, the word sabbath, unquestionably fignifies the whole week.

Before I leave this head, it is fit to obferve, that when the writers of the New Testament call either the whole week, or the seventh day of it, by the name of the sabbath, they indifferently use either the fingular or plural number of the word. In the fore-cited places of the evangelifts, wherein they speak of Christ's rising from the dead on the first day of the week, they fay, on the first day of the sabbaths, in the plural number. Yet it is used in the singular number, to fignify a week, Luke, XVIII. 12. I fast twice in the fabbath, or week. The case is the same, when the word fignifies the feventh day of the week only. It is used in the fingular number, to fignify one fabbath day, Matt. x11. 2, 8. Yet, in many verses of this same chapter, the word is used in the plural number, while it can only fignify one fingle day, ver. 1, 10, 11, 12. In ver. 10, 12. out translators have render'd it in the plural, Jabbath-days. But they have not adventured to do fo in ver. 1, 11. which evidently speak of one fingle day, tho' called fab. baths in the Greek. The word is again used in the same manner, Mark, 1. 21. 11. 23,24 111. 2. Luke, IV. 31. XIII. 10. and in many other places. This observation shews how

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how very trifling the note of some men is upon Coloss. 11. 16. Let no man judge you in respect of a boly day, or of the new moon. or of the fabbath days. They would persuade us, that if the apostle had spoken in this place of the weekly fabbath, he would have used the word sabbath in the fingular number: whereas it has now that it is a common thing with the writers of the New Testament, to use the word labbaths, in the plural number, when they speak only of one fingle sabbath. But this

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We have now feen, that it was upon the first day of the week, that the disciples came together to break bread, or to celebrate the Lord's Supper. It appears from this text to have been their cultom to do fo. Upon the first day of the week (faith St. Luke) when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preach'd unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech until midnight. I know it has been luggested, that Paul's being ready to depart the next day, was the reason of his preaching to them: but it feems rather to be a reason of his continuing his discourse till midnight. But be this as it will, it is very plain, that his being to go away the next day, was not the reason of the disciples meeting to celebrate the Lord's supper on the first day of the week. This they N 2 did

did according to their custom; and would have done it, whether St. Paul had been to go away the next day, or to have tarried at Troas a twelve-month longer. It is not faid, that upon the first day of the week, when the disciples met together to hear Paul preach, because he was to depart the next day, they took that opportunity to break bread; as if it was an accidental thing for them to break bread on that day. But it is faid, that upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, according to their custom, on the first day of every week, Paul took that opportunity to preach to them. It is evident, I fay, from this text, that it was the custom of the Christians at Troas (and answerably in all churches) to meet together for the celebration of public worship, i. e. the Lord's supper, every Lord's day.

Surely not from the Jews, who were all zealous for the observation of the Jabbath, and paid no manner of regard to the Lord's day; nor from the Gentiles: for they observed neither. It was plainly a custom peculiar to Christians, a new custom, begun since Christianity was set up in the world. Whence then could those primitive Christians possibly derive it but from the same original, from whence they derive

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was it possible, the church at Troas should have this custom, but from the apostles, who first gather'd and settled a church there?

Besides, the apostle Paul, by assembling with them, and preaching to them at that time, approved of their custom, and recommended it to us. This is vastly different from his preaching to the Jews in their synagogues on the sabbath day. The reaion of his doing this was, that he had no other opportunity of preaching to them. For the Jews would not meet in the synagogue at a time of the apostle's appointing. They met according to their own custom, and the law of Mojes, upon the Jabbath day, without regarding whether St. Paul would come among them or not. His going then into their fynagogues on the fabbath day, in order to preach to them, and to convert them to Christianity, when he could have no other opportunity, was not so much as the shadow of a sign, that he approved of mens meeting on the sabbatb for public worship, after they are converted. But, in the last cited text we read of men already become converts, and difciples, having a fettled cultom of meeting together for breaking bread, or public worship, on the first day of the week. If they had done wrong in keeping up this N 3 custom,

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St. Paul's approbation of Christians meeting on the Lord's day for public worship, is as evident from what he says, I Cor. xvi. 1, 2. Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gathering when I come. Upon this passage of the apostle, we must first observe, that the laying up in store, here spoken of, does not signify laying it up in a stock at home, but in a common stock, or treasury in the church; as is evident from the last words, That there be not stored.

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no gathering when I come. Such a gathering, when he should come, would not have been at all prevented by each man's laying up a stock at home: this could be prevented only by their putting all their contributions into one public and common stock before hand. What the apostle then had order'd the churches of Galatia, and now ordered the Corinthian church to do, was this; Upon every first day of the week, when they did meet together to break bread, and to join in the other parts of the divine worship, he directed them to make a collection of alms for the poor perfecuted faints in Judæa, and to treasure up that collection in a common flock, that when he should come to receive it, it might be ready for him, and he not have the trouble of then collecting it from particular persons.

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The obvious reason why St. Paul ordered the churches to make their collections, and to put their alms into a common stock upon the first day of the week, was, because he knew it was most convenient to be done on that day: inasmuch as it was their custom, on that day, to assemble for public worship. By this order then, which he here gave, he declared his approbation of their practice, and confirmed their custom. If St. Paul had disliked their practice of paying a religious regard to the first day of

the week, by making that the day of their affembling for public worship, he would most certainly have blamed them for it. We may be the more positive of this, because from his general character, and from his whole conduct we know, that our dear apostle had too much honesty and courage to be afraid of any man; and particularly because in this same epistle to the Corinthians, he does not flick to find fault, and sharply to reprove them, where he thought they did amis, I Cor. 1. 11, 12. 111. 1---4. VI. 1. XI. 17-22. Upon this last passage, we must observe, that when St. Paul herein reproves the Corinthians for their misbehaviour about the Lord's supper, he refers and calls them back to the original institution of it, ver. 23. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you. And when he shews them what it was which Christ appointed, he blames them for doing such things as Christ had not mention'd. like manner, if the Corintbians had of their own heads, instituted the Lord's day, the faithful apostle would have reproved them for acting without a command from Christ in this case, as well as he did condemn them for going beyond Christ's appointment at the Lord's supper. Since then he was fo far from blaming them for observing the Lord's day as a day of public worship,

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ship, as that he approved and confirmed their custom, by ordering them what they should do at such a time of public worthip; it follows, that he knew, it was not an appointment of men, but an institution of Christ. In conjunction with this reafoning, we must also consider, that when the apostle told the churches what they should do, when, for the time to come, they should meet for worship on the Lord's day, he did as good as order them to perfift in this custom of observing this day in this religious manner. It appears then to be an order of the apostle, that Christians should observe the Lord's day, as a day of public worship. And to the order of the apostle we are obliged to submit.

It is easy now to see how the Lord's day ought to be spent, viz. as the Lord's, and not as our own. The works of our callings must be laid aside; else we shall spend it as our own. And, as the Lord's day was appointed for the Lord's supper, or public worship, we must carefully attend upon public worship, and labour thereby to prepare our selves for the injoyment of God in a better world. And if we have any just value for our own souls; if we, in earnest, desire heaven rather than hell; if we are really willing to be happy hereaster, we shall gladly and thankfully spend, as much as possible, of the Lord's

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day, in publick worship, works of piety, and mercy, in serious meditation, and prayer, in reading the holy scriptures, and books of piety and devotion, and in religious conversation; that we may not decline, but may improve, in virtue, and in the divine image, and so in a meetness for glory.

Discourse III.

Of Moral and Positive Duties:

THE difference between moral and positive duties has, in expressions at least, been often carried too far, and magnified beyond all just bounds. Positive duties, even of divine institution, have been, by fome Christians, spoken of in language of contempt, as if they were in themselves of no worth, or importance. Hence others have learn'd the art of making their consciences eafy, while they have lived in the utter neglect of those positive duties, which they themselves have acknowledged to be of divine institution; and the adversaries of our holy religion have boafted of demonstration on the side of insidelity; arguing, upon the now mentioned concession, that fince positive duties are in themselves of no worth, or importance, it is impossible, that they should be injoin'd by a God of infinite wisdom; and that fince it is acknowledged, there are fuch positive institutions in Christianity, this religion could not proproceed from God. How this argument of the Deists can be answer'd by such as advance and defend the foresaid maxim, I cannot take upon me to say. But all appearances of difficulty will vanish, if we rightly consider the nature of positive duties, and the real difference between them, and such as are call'd natural.

As certain and demonstrable as it is, that God is infinitely wife and boly; so certain is it, that there is a foundation in the reafon and nature of things for all the duties of every kind, that God has at any time required of men. It is as much blasphemy to fay, that God acts at any time without reason, as to say, that he acts contrary to it. We agree therefore with the adversaries of revelation, in maintaining, " That " God is not an arbitrary being; that he " does not command things merely from " will and pleasure, that he does not act " arbitrarily, and that he requires nothing " of men but what is founded in the na-" ture of things, and the immutable relations they bear to one another." As God is infinitely reasonable and wise, nothing but what is in it felf reasonable, can proceed from him. There must then be a reason in nature for every command that he has at any time given to mankind. From hence it appears, that many men have made a very wrong distinction between

tween what they have called natural and positive duties. It has been said, that " positive laws want that intrinsic good-" ness which recommends a moral pre-" cept." Whereby while moral precepts have been rightly consider'd as founded in the nature of things; positive duties have been represented as owing their original intirely to arbitrary will and pleasure. Whereas in truth, there is no manner of foundation for fuch a distinction as this, in the case. Both the moral and the positive precepts agree intirely in this, that there is in nature a reason for them all, antecedent to the will of the legislator: otherwise a wise God would not have chofen them as laws for his rational creatures. This excellent observation has been judiciously applied by the ingenious Mr. Foster, in defence of the positive institutions of the Christian religion. His words are; " Neither the substance of such instituted "duties, nor the manner in which they " are to be perform'd, are absolutely in-" different: but there is a reason and use " in both. For positive duties of divine " appointment there is always a reason, " besides the mere will of the Law-" giver a." To the same purpose he well fays; "God always governs himself by

² Foster's usefulness of Christian revelation, p. 293, 294. Edit. 2d.

" the eternal and unalterable rules of wifa

"dom, equity, and goodness.—What God wills is always right, and fit, always upon the whole fittest and best "."

From hence it follows, that the proper distinction between moral and positive duties is, that we can our felves, without a revelation, discover the former: whereas we cannot, without a revelation, discover those that are positive. There is a reason in the nature of things for both; both are fittest and best: but we cannot (though an infinite understanding can) perceive that natural fitness, and that natural reason for a positive institution, till God shall please to reveal it to us. For instance; circumcision was a positive duty of divine appointment: yet, according to what has been already observed, there was, in the nature of things, a reason for it, besides the mere will of the Lawgiver. The difference then between circumcision, and giving meat to the hungry, did not lie in this; that there was a foundation, in nature and reason, for the one, and not for the other; fince there was, in nature, equally a reason for each: but the difference truly consisted in this; that though men's natural reason could discover the duty of giving meat to the hungry; yet men could not, of them-

b Sermons, p. 108, 109.

felves, find out the reason of circumcission. We can dive to the lowest soundation of natural duties, and perceive, in nature, the reason why God has injoin'd them upon us. But we cannot thus go to the soundation of positive duties, or discern, in nature, the reason why God has commanded them; but we infer there must be a natural reason for them, and that a being of infinite wisdom discerns it; because he has actually required us to perform them.

I shall still therefore retain the distinction of natural and positive duties, and understand the words in the sense now explained. All the duties that God has ever required, may, in one sense, be call'd natural, and moral; because there is a natural reason for them all. But when we cannot of our selves discover that natural reason, I would continue to call these duties positive, in opposition to those moral duties whose obligation and reason, we are able to discover.

From what has been faid, it follows; That there is no foundation for faying, that "positive duties must, in every sup-"posable instance of competition, give way to such as are moral." The foundation of this rule has been overturned by observing, that there is not such a distinction between moral and positive duties, as many have imagined, particularly at a Time.

Time, when they have laid down this rule, This rule is built upon a supposition, that " external fervices are, in themselves of " no worth or importance; and that pofi-" tive laws want that intrinsic goodness, " which recommends a moral precept." But this supposition has been shewn to be false, fince, for positive duties of divine appointment, there is always a reason, befides the mere will of the Lawgiver: which reason is no other than the intrinsic goodnels of the politive precept. And if we were omniscient, like our Maker, we should, of our selves, discern the reason, and intrinsic goodness of every positive duty which God has appointed.

The true rule to direct us how to manage, when two duties come into competition, does not at all concern the nature of the duties as moral and positive, as duties to God, or to our neighbour, so as to determine, that any one kind must always give way to the other. In some cases, a duty of religious worship, must give way to a particular instance of charity: in other cases a particular instance of charity must give way to a duty of religious worship, and that, even if it be no more than a positive duty. God ordain'd of old, that every man-child of Abraham's family should be circumcised on the eighth day after his birth; and that the uncircumcifed manchild,

child, who was not circumcifed the eighth day, should be cut off from his people, as having broken God's covenant, Gen. XVII. 10-14. As this duty must have been performed on the eighth day, and could not at all be deferred, it was not to give way to any duty of natural religion, or morality whatfoever. Prayer, attending the fick, directing strangers in the way, and any other moral duties whatfoever must have been intermitted, so long as to find time for circumcifing the child on the eighth day: because this duty could not be deferred; while the others might. In many cases of competition, prayer must give way to the exercise of charity: yet prayer is far enough from wanting that intrinsic goodness, which recommends moral duties. For prayer (including confession, petition, praise, and thanksgiving) is, most unquestionably, a moral duty of necessary, universal, and everlasting obligation, as much, at least, as a child's confessing his fault to his father, asking needful food, or being grateful and thankful for the favours done him by his father. Yet if my neighbour's house take fire, when I am in prayer, I ought, for the present, to leave this moral duty of prayer, for the fake of having an opportunity of doing another moral duty, viz. affifting to quench the fire, or to remove my neighbour's goods. In In this case, prayer gives way, merely, because it may be deferred to another opportunity: whereas, if men do not help to quench the fire, and to remove the goods, that moment, it will be afterward too late: this duty cannot be deferred. Though, in such circumstances, prayer must give place; yet, it is certain, that this (together with the other duties we owe to God) is comprehended under the first and greatest command of all religion, Thou shalt love God with all thy heart: whereas the other duty, to which it gives way, belongs to the fecond and inferior command, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as

thy self.

There are many other instances also wherein (at a time of competition) the duty, which is in it felf, and upon the whole, of the greater consequence, must yet give place to a duty, which, upon the whole, brings far less benefit to mankind: that is, in other words, a duty, that hath more morality in it, must sometimes give place to a duty that has less. It is undoubtedly a duty of morality for a man to teach his children morality: and this tends vaftly more to their good, and to the good of the world, than pulling a young lamb out of a ditch. Yet the parent must interrupt the more important duty of teaching his children the principles and rules of morality, for

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Positive Duties. 195 for the sake of preserving the lamb. The reason is, because this cannot be deserved: whereas he can return to the other more important duty at another time. The general rule then in all such cases of competition, is this; "Do that which is best to be done in the present circumstances;

" and defer that which can best be defer-" red, whether it be a positive, or a natu-

" ral duty."

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The distinction between moral and pofitive duties has been carried fo far in very firong expressions, as to have been the occasion, I fear, of leading many unwary people into an apprehension, that the latter are not at all to be regarded. It has been faid, " The scriptures declare, that " positive duties, without moral righteous-" ness, are not only mean and despicable, " but highly offensive to God." But this is a very partial and unfair state of the case. It represents the scripture as speaking thus of all positive duties as such, and of them only. Whereas the scriptures also declare, that one moral duty, without others, is not only despicable, but highly offensive to God. The whole truth is this; The scripture declares equally, and fometimes in the fame breath, concerning all instances of divine worship, both positive and natural, that if they are performed by a wicked man, God will not accept them. God

God speaks by the prophet, Isa. 1. 11, &c. To what purpose is the multitude of your facrifices unto me? faith the Lord. I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of be-goats. When ye come to appear before me, Who bath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations: incense is an abomination unto me, the new moons, and sabbaths, the calling of affemblies, I cannot away with: it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons, and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. In this paffage there is no particular contempt thrown upon sacrifices, new moons, and fabbaths, and other fuch positive institutions. For the natural duty of prayer is expresly mentioned as well as these. The whole design of the passage was plainly this, viz. To teach the wicked Jews, that because they were wicked, because their hands were full of blood, therefore God would not accept of any kind of worship at all at their hands. God did not mean, that all incense, by whomsoever it was offered, was an abomination to him; but only that the particular incense, that was offer'd by those wicked

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wicked men, was abominable to him upon the account of their wickedness. And this is no more than he faith of the prayers of wicked men too in this same passage; When ye make many prayers, I will not bear: your hands are full of blood. The scripture has expressed this matter in yet stronger terms, Prov. xxvIII. 9. He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination. This does not fignify, that prayer is a mere positive duty, much less that it is in it self of a mean and contemptible nature; but only, that God hates the hypocrify of those, who pretend to worship him, while they do not obey his will. To the same purpose the Pfalmist saith; If I regard iniquity in my beart, the Lord will not hear me, Pfal. LXVI. 18. Again, the scripture faith of wicked men, Isa. LXVI. 3. (not as it is in our translation; He that killeth an ox, is as if he flew a man; but as it is in the old Greek and Arabic versions, and as the plain nature of things requires it should be) The wicked, that killeth an ox, is as if he cut off a dog's neck: the wicked, that offereth an oblation, is as if he offer'd swine's flesh: exactly as Solomon had before faid, The facrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, Prov. xv. 8. This is no more than what God fays of prayer it felf; which is a natural duty, and belongs to the first, and 03

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and chief commandment. The whole meaning then is, that religion will not fave us without morality, or, that God will not accept of any worship that is offer'd by obstinate and impenitent sinners. Thus St. James also says; If any man among you seem to be religious [i. e. a worshiper of God] and bridleth not his tongue, —that man's religion is vain [God will not accept his prayers.] Pure religion, and undefiled before God, even the Father, is this; [which influences and engages a man] to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. Chap. 1. 26, 27.

The holy scripture farther declares, in other instances besides this of prayer, that one moral duty of universal and eternal obligation will not be accepted of God, if another be neglected. The love of God, which is the first, highest, and greatest duty of all, will not be accepted, unless it he accompanied with the love of our neighbour; as we may certainly gather from 1 John, IV. 20, 21. If any man Jay, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a lyar: for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, How can he love God, whom he bath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also. St. Paul likewife teaches us, That the great and necelfary

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fary duties of alms-giving, and of suffering for religion, will not be accepted at the hands of a wicked man, I Cor. XIII. 3. Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it prositeth me no-

thing.

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Upon the whole then, it appears, the scripture does not cast any particular contempt upon positive duties of divine institution, while they continue to be injoin'd upon men; but it says the very same of moral, as of positive duties, viz. That they are an abomination to God, and that he will not accept them, when they are performed in a hypocritical manner, by such as allow themselves to transgress the divine law in other instances, and will not yield universal obedience to all his commandments.

In consequence of this, it must be observed, that as those duties, which are called positive, will not save men without those which are called natural: so neither will the natural save men without the positive. This is evident from the reason and nature of the things themselves. For while I believe, that a positive command (supposing that of celebrating the Lord's supper) is really a command of God, and given to me in particular, there will be as much opposition to the divine wisdom, autho-

authority, and will, and confequently, in this respect, as much malignity of sin, in my refusing to obey this positive command. as in refusing to obey the command, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self. And as this natural command is founded in the nature and reason of things, so is every pohtive command of the scriptures also. that in breaking a positive command, we act contrary to the real nature, and the true reason of things, as much as when we violate a natural precept. No wonder then, that each of these kinds of precepts is equally necessary to salvation. Accordingly the scripture has affured us, that neither will avail to our falvation without the other. Thus our Saviour faith, Matt. XXIII. 23. Wo unto you Scribes, and Pharisees, Hypocrites: for ye pay tithe of mint, and anife, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: thele ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone, i. e. Ye ought to have done the natural duties of judgment, mercy, and faith in God', which ye have omitted; and ye did well in paying your tithes: for this duty you ought not to leave undone. Both the natural and the positive duties must be performed, From our Saviour's faying, that

See my first volume of Notes and Discourses, p. 12.

the Jews, in his days, ought not to leave the duty of paying tithes undone, we certainly infer, that the paying tithes, even of fuch little things, as mint, anife, and cummin was, at that time, required by a divine command. For if there had been no command of God in the case, but the tithing of these particular herbs, and seeds, had been only required by the authority of the elders, Christ would have been so far from faying, You ought not to leave these things undone, that he would rather have folemnly charged them to leave them undone; and have forbidden them to obey the commandments of men, as he did in the case of their making it a point of religion, to wash their hands before dinner, where he introduces God as faying; In vain do they worship me, teaching for do-Etrines the commandments of men, Mark, VII. 7. But in the case of the Pharisees tithing mint, anise, and cummin (or, as St. Luke has it, mint, rue, and all manner of herbs, Chap. x1. 12.) our Saviour does not find fault with them, as if they had therein been guilty of any superstition, or will-worship; but represents them as doing what God had made their duty. Accordingly we find, the Mojaic law required the Jews to pay tithes of all things, among which the tithes of the feed of the land, and

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and of the fruit of the tree, are particu-

larly mention'd, Lev. xxvII. 30.

The same doctrine of the necessity of yielding obedience to positive precepts, as well as natural, is most plainly taught, in the case of king Saul, I Sam. xv. 23. Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. The rebellion here spoken of, was Saul's neglecting to obey a positive command of God, viz. That he should go, and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they had, and not spare them; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass, ver. 3. I suppose, I may have full liberty granted me, to call this a positive command: fince Saul's natural reason could not easily, of its own accord, have discover'd and prov'd this to be his duty. Nay, it is so far from being a plain natural duty, that many men think, it was in it felf barbarous and immoral; and others can but just reconcile themselves to the belief of the lawfulness of what was here commanded. Saul could not have known this duty, had it not been discover'd to him by a positive and express command of God. Yet God was very angry with him for not yielding strict obedience to it; and look'd upon disobedience to this positive command, as of like guilt with the moral evils of witchcraft and idolatry. If then this disobedience of Saul was so heinous, when the precept was of such a nature, as that many men, in our age of insidelity, would argue that it could not possibly be a divine command, and that it would be an immorality to sulfil it: how much more heinous must be our disobedience to those positive precepts of the gospel, against which there does not lie so much as the appearance of

fuch an objection!

The method which Saul took to excuse himself and his army for sparing the best of the Amalekites oxen, sheep, and lambs, was to plead, that they spared them to facrifice them to God, ver. 9, 21. By this Saul represents himself and his people, as fetting themselves to reason about divine commands. Though God had positively required them to destroy all the cattle, both bad and good; yet they, forfooth, would argue, that it was better to spare those of the cattle that were fit for facrifices, and offer them as thank-offerings to God; and fo that the eternal reason and fitness of things, according to their apprehensions, would bear them out in disobeying a command that was merely positive. But here lay their error (if they did really argue with themselves as Saul represents) that they allow'd themselves to think, they were capable of discerning the eternal rea-

fon and fitness of things, better than a God of infinite knowledge and wisdom. Accordingly Samuel justly blames them for their disobedience, notwithstanding the pretence they had for it. Hath the Lord (faith he) as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey, is better than facrifice; and to hearken, than the fat of rams, ver. 22. The facrifices here spoken of, were the best of the Amalekites cattle; which Saul pretended were kept to be offer'd in facrifice to God. These then were free will-offerings, and not any facrifices of divine institution: and to obey the positive precept of destroying all the Amalekites, and all their cattle, must certainly be better than fuch uncommanded facrifices. Their not offering those sacrifices, would have broke no command of God. But their not destroying all the cattle of the Amalekites, was plain and direct disobedience to an express command. So that in this text, here is no comparing moral and positive duties, as many have heedlesly imagin'd; but obeying a positive command, is faid to be better than uninstituted worship. That this worship was uninstituted, and these sacrifices uncommanded, is farther plain, from the words of the text. When the prophet fays, To obey, is better than sacrifice; to be fure he does not mean, that, To obey God, is better

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been his meaning, if he had here spoken of those sacrifices, which were of divine appointment. But if Samuel had here spoken of such sacrifices as God had commanded; still here would have been no comparing of moral and positive duties, but obedience to one positive command would have been compared with obedience to another command of the like positive nature. We learn then from this instance, that we must obey God's positive commands; and that nothing will excuse

our neglecting them.

John the Baptist once set up bis reasoning against a positive command of God, before he knew it to be a divine command. But our Saviour infifted upon the necesfity of yielding obedience, Matt. 111. 14, 15. Jesus came to John to be baptised by him: but John forbad him, saying; I have need to be baptised by you; and do you come to me? Jesus replied; Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteoufness: then be suffer'd bim. In like manner it becomes us to fulfil all righteoufness, by submitting to, and obeying every precept that God has given us, relating to baptism, the Lord's supper, &c. as well as relating to the love of God, and of our neighbour: nor should we, upon any pretence what soever, set our selves to reason again/t

against the divine commands. Mistake me not: I do not fay, that we must act against reason, or believe without it. I am fure, true reason can never interfere with any command of God, whether it be moral or positive. But it is certain fact. that many men do fet themselves to argue against the commands of God, and think they reason well too; as John the Baptist, at first, thought he did, when he would have excused himself from baptizing the Messiah. But as soon as he was satisfied. God had commanded it, he instantly obey'd. In like manner, all the office of our reason, with regard to positive commands contained in a divine revelation, is this, viz. To prove that the revelation is from God, and then to interpret it. When our reafon has thus discover'd the divinity, and meaning of the revelation, it necessarily concludes, that all the commands of that divine revelation, particularly those that are positive, are perfectly rational, and must be punctually obey'd. When our reason is once convinced, that a precept is divine, there must be no reasoning against that precept: and indeed, it is impossible, in the nature of things, that true reason should find any thing unreasonable in it.

All the commands of the revelation, are derived from the *same* fovereign authority of God, and equally founded in the na-

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ture and reason of things: wherefore disobedience to any one of them cannot be compensated by obedience to any others. Partaking of the Lord's supper will not fave men, if they live in the neglect of justice and mercy. And it is as obvious, on the other hand, that if a man believes the Lord's supper to be a divine institution, his highest pretences to justice and mercy will not atone for his neglect of the Lord's supper. For the love of God confifts in keeping his known commands: and if a man faith, he loveth God, and yet allows himself to difregard and disobey a known command of God, he is a lyar; and by his disobedience in this instance, demonstrates, that he does not love God: and, I am fure, the love of our neighbour will never compensate for the want of love to God.

Circumcision, of old, was necessary to men's salvation, as it was the condition of their having the Almighty for their God and Rewarder in the world to come; and the child that died uncircumcised, was deem'd to have broken this covenant, and so had no interest in the Almighty as his Rewarder and his God: though, no doubt, that child would not have been made miserable in the other world; but would only have been left in a state of death for ever. At that time, as circumcision would not

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fave men without moral righteousness: so neither would moral righteoufness have then faved them without circumcifion. Hence the apostle saith, that at that time, when we were Gentiles, and uncircumcifed, we were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of I/rael, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; and were then dead in our fins, and in the uncircumcifion of our flesh, Ephes. 11. 11, 12. Colof. 11. 13. that is to fay, as long as we continued uncircumcised Gentiles, before the coming of Christ, we were condemn'd to death upon the account of our fins, without hope of a refurrection. To a deliverance from this death, circumcifion was, at that time, by means of the divine command and institution, as necessary as justice and charity.

And though circumcision is not necesfary now, under the gospel, yet baptism is, to all those, at least, that believe baptism to be a divine institution, for all ages of Christianity. For it cannot be consistent with salvation, for a man to disobey a precept, which be bimself believes to be X

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It will not be impertinent to add here, that it plainly follows, from what has been already faid, That it is impossible, in the nature of things, for men to make any

any positive duties in religion: for either men can discover the foundation of them, in the reason of things, or they cannot. If they can, then they are really natural duties; and fo are, indeed, duties of God's making. But if men should appoint any institutions in religion, of which they cannot discern any foundation in the reason and nature of things, those buman inscitutions would be most unreasonable and foolish: and a man must be very unwife

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Nothing, that has been here faid, at all interferes with our Saviour's faying, that judgment, mercy and faith, are more weighty matters of the law, than the tithing of mint, anise, and cummin, Matt. XXIII. 23. By calling judgment, mercy, and faith the weightier matters of the law, it is evident, our Saviour did not mean, that the performance of these would atone for the neglect of paying tithes according to the law; fince he expresly fays in this place; These ought ye to have done. we have already feen, that by the weightier matters of the law, he does not mean, that the duties opposed to them have no intrinsic goodness in them: since it is certain, God would not have injoin'd them, if there were not a reason for them in the nature of things. But the comparison here made between different duties, some of which are faid to be more weighty than others, is of the same nature with the comparison which is made between the duties of love to God, and love to men, These are both great and weighty duties; but the greater of them is love to God; as we are taught by our natural reason, and by our Saviour's faying; Thou Shalt love the Lord thy God - this is the first, and great commandment; and the second is like unto it (viz. in being also a great, though not the very greatest; for it is not the first. but the fecond command) Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy felf, Matt. XXII. 37, &c. These two commandments are the greater, because they are very general, and comprehend many particular duties under them. In like manner, judgment, mercy, and faith in God, must be more weighty duties than paying tithes; because this particular duty of paying tithes, did not include the others; and a man, who very punctually paid his tithes, might have no love to God, or men: whereas justice would have obliged a man, in our Saviour's days, to pay his tithes to those to whom, by the law, they were due, as well as to practife all other instances of righteoufness and equity toward all mankind: and faith in God would lead him to this particular duty of paying tithes in obedience to the divine command, as well as to all

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all other duties of religion and morality fudgment, or justice, mercy, and faith, included tithing, and innumerable other duties also, and therefore were weightier matters of the law, than any one of the particular duties included under them. Thus an army is a more weighty thing, than

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There is yet another reason also why Christ calls judgment, mercy, and faith, the weightier matters of the law; and that is, because the performance of these duties, in the full extent of them, and in all the particulars comprehended under them, brings most bonour to God, and does the greatest good in the world; abundantly more than could be effected by mens merely paying their tithes, though in the most

exact and punctual manner.

Thus also we are to understand what was said by the Scribe, and confirmed by our Saviour, Mark, XII. 33, 34. To love God and our neighbour, is more than all whole burnt-offerings and facrifices: that is, love to God (which includes obedience to all his commands, particularly to the commands of sacrifices) is better than all sacrifices without that love to God: Just as love to God is more than the matter of any moral duty (suppose alms-giving) that does not flow from love to God. So that here is no contempt thrown on such sacrifices as

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God required; that is, fuch as flow'd from love to him; but only upon bypocritical

performances.

In this same manner must we interpret those words of God; I defired mercy, and not facrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings, Hosea, vi. 6. plain meaning is, that God would not accept of facrifices and burnt-offerings, as a compensation for mens living without the knowledge of God, and without the exercife of mercy toward their fellow-crea-The wicked Israelites hoped to be faved, upon the account of the facrifices which they offer'd to God, to make atonement for their fins, even though they continued in them without repentance. But God declares, that facrifices could only make atonement for such as did repent, and obey all the precepts of the law. The knowledge of God manifested in a good life, and the exercise of mercy toward men, were weightier matters of the law than facrifices; because the former brought more honour to God, and did more good to mankind, than facrifices alone could possibly do; and because the knowledge of God included facrifices in particular and innumerable other duties also. much, at least, is certain, that the know ledge of God, and the exercise of merc could not, in the prophet's days, mak atone

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atonement for men's neglecting the facrifices then required by the law; and that those facrifices of divine appointment, had an intrinsic goodness in them, since God would not have injoin'd them, if there had not been an antecedent reason for them

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To this it may be added, that there is reason to think, that the text now cited, does not (as has hitherto been supposed) speak of such sacrifices as were of divine appointment, but rather of men's freewill offerings. For in both places, where our Saviour cites these words, he applies them to the competition that happen'd between duties of morality, on the one hand, and duties instituted by the arbitrary appointment of men on the other. The first place where our Saviour quotes these words, is Matt. 1x. 13. upon the occasion of the Pharisees blaming him for eating with publicans and finners, when his defign was to call them to repentance, ver. 11, 13. His avoiding such conversation with them, was so far from being a politive duty of divine appointment, that it was no duty at all: though the Pharisees, of their own beads, had required their difciples to perform it. The other place, where our Saviour quotes these words, Matt. XII. 7. was upon the occasion of the Pharifees blaming his disciples, when they P 3

were hungry, and paffing through a field of corn, for plucking the ears of corn, and eating them upon the Sabbath day, ver. 1, 2. Upon this last circumstance of their doing it on the sabbath day, the Pharisees laid the whole stress; as appears from the accusation it self, as worded by the Pharifees, and from our Saviour's answer, in defence of what his disciples had done. For David did eat the shew-bread on the sabbath day, as appears from hence, that the high priest gave him the bread which was taken from before the Lord, to put bot bread, in the day when it was taken away, 1 Sam. xx1. 6. which day was the fabbath; as it is written, Every fabbath he shall set it in order before the Lord, Lev. xxIv. 8. The other instance cited by our Saviour, of the priest's profaning the sabbath, by performing laborious works in the temple, on the sabbath day, is express, ver. 5. What the disciples here did, was not contrary to any divine command whatsoever, whether natural or positive. The thing it self was expresly allow'd by the law, in those words; When thou comest into the standing corn of they neighbours, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thy hand, Deut. XXIII. 25. And there was no divine law, which forbid the disciples to do this on the sabbath day. It was only forbidden by the superstitious Pharifees. In both places then, where our Savi-

Saviour cites that divine faying, I will bave mercy, and not sacrifice; he does not compare moral and positive duties together, but only the commandments of men with the commandments of God. From our Saviour's thus applying that divine faying, it is therefore most natural to conclude, that God did not therein speak of such facrifices as be himself had appointed; but merely of those free-will offerings, which the law had not commanded, like those which king Saul faid he had intended to offer from among the spoils of the Amalekites. It has been thought, though without reason, that divine institutions of a positive nature, have been opposed to moral duties, in what we read, Mic. vi. 6, 7, 8. Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow my self before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? Thus Balak spake. Next follows what Balaam an-Jwer'd him; He bath shewed thee, O man [O Balak, by the light of nature] what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? In this text, there is no comparison made between moral ral and positive duties, but between the meer institutions of men, and duties injoin'd by God. The facrifices, of which Balak spake, were not divine institutions. but mere Heathen sacrifices; as is evident from his mentioning the offering up his children in facrifice. Sacrifices of divine institution, are so far from being mentioned in Balak's question, that they are included and required in that part of Balaam's answer, which speaks of a man's walking bumbly with God. For a man among the Jews, could not be faid to walk bumbly with God, but would have been condemn'd as finning presumptuously, in case he disobeyed any positive precept of the Mosaic law.

To as little purpose also have some urged that passage, Jerem. vii. 22, 23. I spake not to your fathers concerning burnt-offerings and sacrifices: but this thing commanded I them, saying; Obey my voice. For this text does not at all speak of sacrifices of divine institution, as has been shewn in this Volume.

There is yet another text parallel to these, in which it is said; To do justice and judgment, is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice, Prov. xx1. 3. But it is most natural to suppose, that it speaks only of buman institutions, as has been proved to be the case in the three parallel texts already

ready confider'd. But if any one should still contend, that Solomon here speaks of divine institutions, it may be allow'd, without injuring the argument advanced in this discourse. For, to be sure, God had rather men should do justice than that they should neglect it, and then offer facrifice to atone for the neglect. And it must be added, that a Jew could not be just without offering the facrifices that were requi-

red of him by the law of Moses.

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Some, I perceive, have imagin'd, that our Saviour compares moral and positive duties, in what he faid, Luke, XIII. 15. upon his being accused of having broken the fourth commandment, by his healing a woman on the fabbath day. His defence was in these words; Doth not each one of you, on the sabbath day, loofe his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, to be loosed from this bond on the fabbath day? a But there is not in this place the least appearance of Christ's comparing a natural duty with a positive rite or ceremony. His whole defign here was, to convince the Jews, that what he had done, was not at all probibited by any divine law what soever; and

^a Dr. Clarke's fermons, Vol. x. p. 46.

that it was never the intention of the fourth command to forbid such works of necessity and mercy as their watering their cattle, or his healing the sick on the sabbath day; and to make the Jews sensible, that they were very unreasonable and perverse in condemning him as breaking the fourth commandment, when he did good to a rational creature, and an Israelite, while they allow'd that it was no breach of the commandment to do good to the brute beasts.

It has been thought by some, that St. Peter taught the doctrine I have been here opposing, when he said, Acts, x. 34, 35. Of a truth, I perceive, God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. But upon reconsidering this text, it will be found to teach no fuch thing. To be fure, St. Peter did not mean to fay, that the Heathens, while idolaters, should be faved: since he speaks of such as fear God. But the fear of the true God, is absolutely inconsistent with the worship of idols, as both nature and scripture agree to teach, Deut. vi. 13, 14. XIII. 2, 3, 4. Joshua, XXIV. 14. 2 Kings, XVII. 35, 36, 38, 39 Pfal. xcvi. 4, 5. So that it cannot be argued from these words of St. Peter, as some have thought, that Socrates, and other philosophers, might be faved; faved; fince they all conform'd to the establish'd religions of their several countries, which were idolatrous, and continued in this inexcusable sin, as long as they lived, and so had not the fear of God before their eyes. Nor did St. Peter intend to fay, that if a Gentile forfook idolatry, and all other fins, and fear'd the true God, and wrought righteousness, he was immediately intitled to salvation. He did not say to Cornelius, "Your fear of " God, and your righteousness are suffici-" ent: you may safely remain in your " present state." But, on the contrary, the apostle was fent by God to tell Cornelius words, whereby he might be faved, Acts, xi. 14. Consequently, without the knowledge and belief of these, he could not be faved. From hence it appears, that something else was necessary to falvation, befides the fear of God, and the works of righteousness. Cornelius still wanted faith in Christ: else Peter would not have been sent to preach it to him. He particularly told him (as part of the words, whereby he might be faved) that through Christ's name, whoseever believeth in him Should receive remission of sins, Acts, x. 43. so that St. Peter's doctrine is, That faith in Christ was as necessary to remission, as righteousness and the fear of God. Our blessed Saviour spoke in the same manner to a Jewish ruler, Mark.

Mark, x. 17-23. This Jew had feared God, and wrought righteousness from his youth: and yet Christ tells him, he was not yet enter'd into the kingdom of God, and that still he lacked fomething to qualify him for falvation; and that was, To follow Christ, and to be ready to leave all his great possessions for his fake. When, therefore, St. Peter said ; He that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him; he meant, that fuch a one would, upon his faith in Christ, be accepted as qualified to enter into the church by baptism. If a known idolater, or unrighteous man, had professed to be a believer, and offer'd himself to Christian baptism, he would have been rejected. But whatever a man otherwise was, whether circumcifed or uncircumcifed, whether bond or free; if he did fear God, and work righteousness, he was welcome to enter into the church by faith and baptism. The Jews, and even Peter, at first, would have had fuch a man as Cornelius refused, how great foever his faith in Christ had been, because he was uncircumcised: but God accepted him; and order'd Peter to instruct him in Christianity, that so, through faith in Christ, he might receive the remission of his fins, and eternal life: and immediately, upon Peter's preaching to him, Cornelius became a true believer, and

Positive Duties. and was baptifed in the name of the Lord.

As positive duties are branches of the first and greatest commandment of all, Thou shalt love God, they ought not to be spoken of (while they are in force) with contempt, as if they were trifling and despicable in themselves. If natural duties are the dictates of natural, buman reason; politive duties are the dictates of divine, infinite wisdom: which is certainly as high an original as natural reason. And therefore it is very unreasonable to magnify one kind of duties so extravagantly as some

men do, above the other.

Though, as positive duties are all instrumental, and defign'd to improve us in love to God and men; these natural duties must have all the preference, which is due to the end above the means: while, on the other hand, the means must not be slighted and neglected. Tho' food be not life, but only the means of life; yet it must not be neglected on that account: nay, it must be regarded and made use of for that very reason, because it is a means conducing to so high an end. So positive duties must be carefully performed for this very reason, because they are means of religion, and tend to promote the love of God and man.

Again; as the circumstances and relations of mankind, on which moral duties depend, never alter: so moral duties are of perpetual obligation. But as positive duties are alter'd, when circumstances vary; moral duties must have all the preserence which the perpetuity of the obligation can give them. Yet still, while the circumstances continue the same, the positive duties are in full force, and as much arise from the nature of things, and as much

oblige as the other.

Upon the whole then we fee, that the most exact regard and obedience possible to Christ's particular commands of baptism, and the Lord's Supper, will not fave us without a fincere and patient continuance in well doing, in the practice of the substantial virtues of a good life; that, on the other hand, as a God of infinite wisdom has required us to be baptifed, and to join with the church in communion, in breaking of bread, and in prayers, there is evidently a reason, in the nature of things, for these solemn duties; and that therefore they must not be slighted, or neglected as useless and indifferent ceremonies by any, especially by such as esteem them to be of divine institution. For if such flight them, it is evident they have not the love of God in their bearts, nor his fear before their eyes.

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DISCOURSE IV.

A Parable.

N the reign of the late emperor of Morocco, a rich gentleman of the city of Morocco, named Hofiah, made a voyage to Gibraltar. When he was returning home, almost within fight of the coast, a violent storm arose, which made the sea more than ordinary tempestuous. A furious wave ran through the ship, and washed Hohab over-board: another wave convey'd him into an English ship, that happen'd to pass by, just at that time, in her way to Gibraltar. The people on board the Morocco ship, saw Hosiah thrown into the sea, and faw no more of him. Each ship return'd to its own country. When the Morocco ship came home, the failers told the story of Hosiah's fate. Hereupon his next brother feized his estate, and all his effects, and was legally settled in possesfion of them; every one concluding that Hofiah was drown'd. But not long after he arrived at Gibraltar, he found an opportunity

portunity of a passage to Morceco. Upon his return home, finding his estate and est fects in the possession of his brother, who refused to deliver them up; he appealed to the law, and demanded them in a court The brother pleaded, that Hoof justice. fiah was drown'd; and that therefore this person, who now claim'd the estate, was a counterfeit and impostor. Hosiab affured the judges, that he was the same person as he pretended to be; and therefore had an indisputable right to the estate. The emperor hearing of this uncommon case, was moved by his curiofity, to fit himself in judgment upon it. He first examin'd the people of the Morocco ship, in which Hofiab first put to sea: who all assured him, that Hofiab was wash'd over-board, in the high seas, at a distance from land, and that they faw him no more. The emperor next examin'd Hosiah, who told his majefty, That he was, indeed, wash'd overboard; but that, in that very moment, another ship passed by (not observed by the failors because of the tempest and a fog) into which another wave happily convey'd him: by which means he was preferred. As none of this ship's crew were present to attest this fact, the emperor would not depend upon his story. Hosiah therefore defired liberty to call in some substantial witnesses, who should prove, that (by what

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what means foever he was preserved) he was indeed the true Hofiah. Eight such witnesses appeared, and swore, that this was really Hofiah, that they had been intimately acquainted with him for three or four years together, before his first going to fea, and had converfed with him every day for a full month fince his return; and that therefore they could not be deceiv'd in the person. Upon this, most that heard the trial, were sufficiently satisfied, that this person was really the Hosiah, whom he pretended to be: the evidence feem'd to them to be fully strong and unexcepti-But the emperor was strongly cnable. biass'd in favour of the younger brother; for which reason, he was resolved, if posfible, to make these eight evidences revoke and contradict their testimony. therefore threaten'd them, that if they would not own they were bribed, and had given false evidence, he would order every one of them to be put to death by tor-They faid, they had been fo long acquainted with Hosiab, and were so very fure, from many circumstances, that this was the same person, that they would rather Juffer any kind of death, than deny the truth. Accordingly they all, to a man, persisted in their evidence to the last, and were actually put to death, because they would not revoke their testimony: while

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the emperor offer'd them their lives, and some distinguish'd honours, if they would comply with his demands. The spectators of their courage, perseverance, and death, could not but conclude, that these eight evidences had testified nothing but the truth: and there is the greatest reafon in the world to think fo. Surely it cannot be thought that they were mistaken as to the person of Hosiah. They were too long, and too intimately acquainted with him, and the time of his absence at Gibraltar was too short, to make it possible for them to be at any uncertainties about him. It is most unquestionable, that the eight witnesses knew what was the truth in the case. If the person, who now demanded the estate, was not Hosiah, they must know that it was not he. But if it was really Hosiah, they could not but be fure that here was no imposture: so that there is no room to suspect their want of understanding and experience in the case. And, I am fure, there is as little to imagine there was any want of bonesty and sincerity in their testimony. They had no worldly temptation whatever to perfift in faying, that Hofiah was returned: they got nothing at all by giving their testimony. Nay, on the other hand, they loft all they had in this world, all their riches, honours, and pleasures, and even their lives

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lives too, for the fake of testifying that Hosiah was come home alive, and in health. It cannot then be thought, that these witnesses had a regard to any thing but truth in the testimony they gave. If they had been men of dishonest principles, they would undoubtedly have revoked their testimony to fave their lives. As they could get nothing in this world by their testimony, it can never be imagin'd they would have persisted in it, if they had not been very fure that Hofiah was returned from sea. And they could not but be fure, because their friend had been absent but a few days. Conducted by fuch reafoning, almost all that knew the fact of the flory, are fully fatisfied, that their evidence is true, and that Hofiab was really preserved, and restored to his country: yet still the emperor would not be convinced, but settled Hosiah's brother in possession of the whole estate. The reader, who is no way interested in the story, one way or another, and who can judge freely, without any influence of worldly hope, or fear, will undoubtedly condemn the emperor as very partial, unreasonable, and cruel. is a plain case, he ought to have believed the evidence of eight such substantial witnesses, and to have restored Hosiah to his estate.

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As the reader has already condemn'd the unreasonable conduct of the partial emperor; fo, for the same reason, he cannot but condemn the more unreasonable conduct of those among us, who will not receive the testimony of the apostles, concerning the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. If the intimate acquaintance that Hosiah's friends had with him for above three years together, made it impossible for them to be mistaken in the man; the intimate acquaintance of the apostles with Christ, for full as long a time, must have made it equally impossible for them to be deceived by any one that should come to them in his name, and converse familiarly with them for forty days together. If Hofiah's friends demonstrated their fincerity, by giving up all the comforts of life, and life it felf, rather than revoke their testimony: there is, at least, as much proof of the fincerity of the apostles, in testifying the resurrection of Jesus, since they were so far from getting any thing of this world, by speaking in his favour, that, on the contrary, by this means, they lost all the comforts and accommodations of this world, and their own lives into the bargain. Thewriters of the New Testament, are eight, who all concur in giving the fame testimo-Now, I would defire to know of any man, who calls himself a Deist, whether he would

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would not receive the testimony of the eight men of Morocco before-mentioned; and whether he does not blame the emperor for not believing them, when they gave the strongest possible proof of their testimony, by sealing it with their blood? If so, let him consider whether he is not much more unreasonable in not believing the resurrection of Christ upon the testimony of the eight writers of the New Teflament, and of many others also, who likewise sealed their testimony with their blood? Whatever reasons he can give for his believing the friends of Hofiah, will equally, at least, oblige him to believe the disciples of Jesus. And if he will not believe them (though they could not be mistaken, and proved by their sufferings, that they were fincere in their testimony) I should be glad to be informed, for what reasons he would believe the friends of Hosiab. A serious comparison of these things, must needs satisfy any impartial searcher after truth, that the apostles have given us sufficient evidence of the resurrection of Jefus; which is what I intended to establish by this parable.

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DISCOURSE V.

A second Parable.

Gentleman of the country, upon the occasion of some signal service his man had done him, gave him a curious filver cup. David (for that was the man's name) was exceedingly fond of the prefent, and preferved it with the greatest care. But, one day, by accident, his cup fell into a vessel of Aqua fortis: he taking it to be no other than common water, thought his cup fafe enough, and therefore neglected it till he had dispatch'd an affair of importance, about which his mafter had employ'd him, imagining it would be then time enough to take out his cup. At length a fellow-fervant came into the same room, when the cup was near diffolved, and looking into the Aqua fortis, asked David, who had thrown any thing into that vessel? David said, That his cup accidently fell into that water. Upon this his fellow-fervant inform'd him, that it was

was not common water, but Aqua fortis; and that his cup was almost dissolv'd in it. When David heard this, and was fatisfied of the truth of it with his own eyes, he heartily grieved for the loss of his cup. And at the same, he was astonished to see the liquor as clear as if nothing at all had been dissolved in it, or mix'd with it. after a little while, he faw the small remains of it vanish, and could not now perceive the least particle of the filver, he utterly despair'd of ever seeing his cup more. Upon this he bitterly bewail'd his loss with many tears, and refus'd to be comforted. His fellow-fervant pitying him in this condition of forrow, told him, That their master could restore him the very same cup again. David disregarded this as utterly impossible: " What do you " talk of (fays he to his fellow-fervant;) " Do you not know, that the cup is intire-" ly dissolved, and that not the least bit of " the filver is to be feen? Are not all the " little invisible parts of the cup mingled " with Aqua fortis, and become parts of the " same mass? How then can my master, " or any man alive produce the filver a-" new, and restore my cup? It can never " be: I give it over for lost: I am sure I " shall never see it again." His fellowservant still insisted, that their master could Q 4

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restore the same cup. And David as earneftly infifted, that it was absolutely impossible. While they were debating this point, their master came in, and ask'd them what they were disputing about? When they had inform'd him, he faid to David, "What you so positively pro-" nounced to be impossible, you shall see " me do with very little trouble. " me (said he to the other servant) some " falt water, and pour it into the vessel of Aqua fortis." Now look (fays he) the filver will presently fall to the bottom of the vessel, in a white powder. When David saw this, he began to have good hopes of seeing his cup restored. Next his master order'd a servant to drain off the liquor, and to take up the powder'd filver and melt it: thus it was reduced into one folid piece; and then, by the filver-smith's hammer, form'd into a cup of the same shape as before. Thus David's cup was restored with a very small loss of its weight and value.

It is no uncommon thing for men, like David in this parable, to imagine that to be impossible, which yet persons of greater skill and wisdom than themselves can easily perform. David was as positive, that his master could not restore his cup, as unbelievers are, that it is incredible God should

should raise the dead: and he had as much appearance of reason on his side as they. If a human body, dead, crumbles into dust, and mingles with the earth, or with the water of the sea, so as to be discernable no more; so the filver cup was dissolved into parts invisible, and mingled with the mass of Aqua fortis. Is it not then easy to be conceived, that as a man has wisdom and power enough to bring these parts of the filver to be visible again, and to reduce them to a cup as before: fo God, the maker of heaven and earth, must have wisdom and power enough to bring the parts of a disfolved human body together, and to form them into a human body again? What though David could not restore his own cup? Was that a reason that no man could do it? And when his master had promised to reflore it; what though David could not possibly conjecture by what method his master would do it? This was no proof that his master was at a loss for a method. So, though men cannot raise the dead, yet God, who is infinitely wifer and stronger, can. And though we cannot find out the method by which he will do this; yet we are fure, that he who, at first, took the dust of the ground, and form'd it into the body of man, can, with the same ease, take the

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the dust, into which my body shall be refolved, and form it into a buman body again. Nay, even if a body be burnt, and confumed by fire, the parts of that body are no more really lost, than the invifible particles of the diffolved cup. As David then was wrong in thinking, that it was impossible for his master to restore his cup; it must be, at least, equally wrong for us to think it impossible that God should raise the dead.

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DISCOURSE VI.

The Agapae, or Love-feasts, of the ancient Christians.

AFTER all that I have read concerning the love-feasts of the ancient Christians, the subject seems to need a review. And I the rather set my self to consider it, because it will give me occasion to explain two or three texts of scripture, which, I am apprehensive, have been ge-

nerally misunderstood.

Their name is mention'd by St. Jude, ver. 12. These are spots in your seasts of charity, or in your love-feasts. And it is likely that St. Peter named them too, 2 Pet. II. 13. Our translation, after some Greek copies, reads, Sporting themselves with their own deseivings (ensurements and amage and well are Latin, and Arabic versions, and the Vulgar Latin, and Arabic versions, read, Sporting themselves (or living luxuriously) in their love-feasts (ayamais.) And the author of the Æthiopic version, how much soever he has mistaken the sense of

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the place, yet appears plainly to have read αγαπαις, or αγαπη in his copy. And the parallel place in St. Jude seems to confirm this reading. But neither Peter nor Jude describe the feasts. The oldest author that does this, is Tertullian, in his Apology, Chap. XXXIX. In the beginning of that chapter, he gives an account of the public worship of Christians; and after mentioning various other things, he defcribes the love-feasts in the following manner. Having taken notice of some luxurious suppers among the Heathens, he adds; 56 a The nature of our Supper may be " known by its name Ayann, that is, love. " There we refresh the poor. We do not " fit down till we have first pray'd to "God (i. e. faid grace.) Every one eats " what is fufficient, and drinks with fo-" briety, as remembring, that at night " they must ingage in the adoration of " God. They converse together in such " a manner, as becomes those who know

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Coena nostra de nomine rationem sui ostendit. Vocatur ayann, id quod dilectio penes Graecos est:——inopes quosque resrigerio isto juvamus.——Non prius discumbitur, quam oratio ad Deum praegustetur. Editur quantum esurientes capiunt: bibitur quantum pudicis est utile. Ita saturantur, ut qui meminerint etiam per nostem adorandum Deum sibi esse. Ita sabulantur, ut qui sciant, Dominum audire. Post aquam manualem, et lumina, ut quisque de scripturis sanctis, vel de proprio ingenio potest, provocatur in medium Deo canere.——Aeque oratio convivium dirimit. Inde disceditur.

" that God hears them. After washing " their hands, and lighting candles, they " fing divine fongs, either taken from the " holy scriptures, or of their own com-" position, as every one is able. Prayer " also concludes the feast (i. e. they say " grace.) Then every one goes home." By this particular account of a love-feast, we learn, that it was a supper, and that the eucharist did not attend it, either before or after. As foon as the love-feast was ended, the Christians withdrew to their feveral habitations: fo that it is evident the Lord's supper did not succeed it. Nor does Tertullian give the least hint as if the eucharist was celebrated immediately before it: nay, the contrary is certain, from comparing other passages in his writings. For, whereas the love-feast was a supper, and continued till candle lighting, as he expresly says; the same Tertullian affures us, that in his days the eucharist was celebrated only in the morning, before Perhaps he means this, when speaking to a Christian woman who had a Heathen husband, he fays; "bLet not your hus-" band know what it is which you eat in " secret, before you take any food;" i. e. any of the family food. Perhaps he hereby meant, that she went before day to partake

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b Non sciet maritus quid secreto ante omnem cibum guses. Ad uxorem. Lib. ii. Cap. v.

of the eucharist, with other Christians, in the church; which ordinance was kept as a fecret from her Heathen husband. But I do not insist on this, because it is possible Tertullian may allude to a custom in those days, of Christians carrying home some of the eucharistical bread for their own private use; or to another custom of the pastor's sending some of it to such as were absent upon the account of sickness, imprisonment for conscience sake, and the like sufficient reasons. If he alludes to either of these customs, then his meaning must be, that she should not let her husband know what she eats secretly in her closet in the morning, when she takes some of the eucharistical bread, which she keeps there in referve. This passage therefore may not be thought fufficient to prove, that the church, in Tertullian's days, celebrated the eucharist in the morning. But there is another passage in him that will put the matter out of all doubt, viz. " Eucharistiae sacramentum et in tempore et victus, et omnibus mandatum a domino, « etiam antelucanis coetibus, nec de aliorum " manu quam praesidentium sumimus." The meaning of this passage has, I think, been greatly mistaken by such as have not observed the opposition between tempore

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De corona militis. Cap. iii,

the Ancient CHRISTIANS. victus, and antelucanis coetibus; and the like opposition between omnibus, and praesidentium. Some authors have cited this paffage to prove, that Tertullian fays, the eucharist was, in his time, celebrated both morning and evening. And, in order to make it feem to speak this sense, bishop Fell has strangely curtail'd the words, quoting them thus; d Eucharistiae sacramentum tempore victus de praesidentium manu sumimus. But herein that learned man abused both his author and his readers. Upon comparing the context in Tertullian, it feems evident, that the above cited paffage ought to be translated to this purpose, viz. " Though our Lord instituted the " facrament of the eucharist, at supper " time, and commanded all Christians to " celebrate it: yet we partake of it even " in our morning affemblies, before day, " and receive it only from the hands of the " pastors." Tertullian had just before spoken of some alterations, which tradition had made with regard to baptism (as it had introduced the trine immersion, taking milk and boney, &c.) and then he adds, that tradition had likewise alter'd some circumstances relating to the Lord's Supper. And as Tertullian says, that they then received the eucharist only from the

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d In Cypriani epist. 63. p. 156. See afterward, Note (1) hands

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hands of the pastors, though our Lord commanded all Christians to celebrate it; so he seems plainly to mean, that they then received it only in their morning assemblies, though it was originally appointed at sup-

per time.

Cyprian confirms the same thing, though his fense has also been mistaken by the same learned men. It must first be observed, that, in the context, Cyprian is arguing against a fort of men, who used no other liquor but water, when they celebrated the eucharist in the morning. Their reason for not mixing wine with the water was, that the persecutors of Christianity might not discover by the smell of their breath, that they had been at a Christian affembly, and partook of the eucharist. When Cyprian had faid many things to condemn this practice, he adds, " " Will " any one flatter himself with thinking, " that he does the whole of his duty, and

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An illa sibi aliquis contemplatione blanditur, quod etsi mane aqua sola offerri videtur, tamen cum ad coenandum
venimus mixtum calicem offerimus? Sed cum coenamus, ad
convivium nostrum plebem convocare non possumus, ut sacramenti veritatem, fraternitate omni praesente, celebremus.
At enim non mane, sed post coenam mixtum calicem obtult
Dominus. Nunquid ergo dominicum, post coenam, celebrare debemus, ut sic mixtum calicem frequentandis dominicis offeramus? Christum offerre oportebat circa vesperam
diei.——Nos autem resurrectionem Domini mane celebramus. Et quia passionis ejus mentionem in sacrificiis omnibus
facimus, &c. Epist. lxiii. ad Caecilium. Cap. xii.

the Ancient CHRISTIANS. 241

" partakes of wine and water, because tho'

" in the morning water alone is offer'd, yet

"when we come to supper, we offer a mixture of wine and water? This is no excuse: since at our suppers we cannot

" call the church together, and so have " not at that time, an opportunity of ce-

" lebrating a true eucharist in a full as-

" sembly of the brethren. But you will

" object, that Christ offer'd the mix'd cup " not in the morning, but after supper.

"I answer; Must we therefore celebrate

" the eucharist after supper, that we

" might thus .offer a mixed cup in reite" rated eucharists? [i. e. in both a morn-

"ing, and an evening eucharist in the

" same day.] It was requisite that Christ

" should celebrate the eucharist in the

" evening.—But we celebrate the re-

" furrection of the Lord in the morning,

" and mention his sufferings in all our fa-

" crifices." From this passage of Cyprian, it appears, that in his country, Africa

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(and, no doubt, at Rome also, where lived Caecilius, to whom Cyprian wrote this let-

ter) the church did not at all celebrate the

eucharist in the evening, but only in the morning. Agreeably to this Austin says,

" It is evident indeed, that when the dif-

" ciples first received our Lord's body and

" blood, they did not receive it fasting.

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" Yes will any one upon this account re-" proach the universal church, because " her members always receive it fasting? " ___ This custom is observed, and re-" tain'd through the whole world f." Except that (as he observes in the same letter) in some places, the Thursday before Easter, the Christians did celebrate the eucharift twice, both in the morning, and also after supper; and in other places, on that one day, only in the evening 8. In like manner Socrates tells us, that some Egyptians did communicate in the evening on the fabbath, after a plentiful and fumptuous meal, contrary to the custom of Notwithstanding these ex-Christians h. press words, contrary to the custom of Christians, bishop Fell did not stick to cite this passage as a proof that Christians in general did conform to this custom; which is not

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⁸ Ibid. Cap. iv.

h Αιγυπλίοι δε γελονες ονλες Αλεξανδεεων, και οι την Θηδαιδα οικενλες, εν σαββάλω μεν ποιενλαι σωιαξεις εχως εθ γελογιανοις των μυσηειων μελαλαμβανεσι μελα γαρ το ευωχηθηναι, και παιλοιων εδεσμαλων εμφορηθηναι περι εσπεραν προσφερονλες, των μυσηριων μελαλαμβανεσην. Hift. Eccles. lib. v. cap. xxii. p. 287. A. Mogunt. 1677.

the Ancient CHRISTIANS. 243 a little furprizing. ' The third council of Carthage, in its XXIXth canon, required Christians to communicate fasting. When the Christians thus communicated fasting, it is evident, they could communicate only in the morning; because they held it to be unlawful to keep a fast on the Lord's day k. Pliny likewise, in the second century, speaks of the eucharist as celebrated only before day; and, at the same time, agrees with Tertullian and Cyprian, in speaking of another feast held by the Christians in the evening of the same day. His account is this: 1 " The Christians, whom he ex-" amin'd, affored him, that the whole of "their fault or error, was this, that it " was their custom, on a stated day, to " hold their affembles before the morning

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i The bishop's words are; Constat eucharistiam, licet horis antelucanis sumtam, vespere etiam distribui solitam: coius rei locuples cestis Tertullianus, lib. de coróna, c. iii. Eucharistiae sacramentum tempore victus de praesidentium manu sumimus. Et alibi monet, ut finitis stationibus sumatur. Consuetudo post coenam communicandi diu duravic in ecclesia; Socrates enim ait, lib. v. cap. xxii. Aryunsioi de pussous, &c. as in the preceding note. Fell's note on Cyprian's lxiiid Epist. p. 156.

Apostolic canon lxiv. al. lxvi. Gangren. canon xviii.

Affirmabant [Christiani] hanc fuisse summam vel culpae sue, vel erroris, quod essent soliti stato die ante lucem convenire—— seque sacramento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne surta——committerent:——quibus peractis morem sibi discedendi suisse, rursusque coeundi ad capiendum cibum, promiscuum tamen, et innoxium: quod ipsum sacre desisse post edictum meum, quo, secundum mandata tua, hetaerias esse vetueram. Epist. xcvii.

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" light came on, and to bind themselves " by a facrament to do no wickedness, &c. " which things being performed, they " used to depart, and to come together again to partake of a common and innocent meal: from which however they " desisted, after I publish'd my edict a-" gainst clubs." These common and innocent meals, cannot be thought to be any other than the Christian agapae, or lovefeasts. They agree exactly with the account before given of them from Tertullian: for they were plainly suppers, and did not attend upon the eucharist. For after the eucharist was ended in the morning, the Christians went home; and met together again at another time, viz. in the evening, for this common meal. There is a passage in Lucian, so very parallel to those now cited from Tertullian, Cyprian, and Pliny, that I cannot help thinking he speaks of the same things. Lucian tells us, that when Peregrinus, a Christian, was in prifon, " You might have feen, early in the " morning, old women, fome widows, and " orphans, waiting at the prison. " presidents bribed the guards, and lodged " in the prison with him. Afterward [i.t. " in

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m Faler use sudus ne ogar maga ra Seguolneia meculavorla years ia, xneas rivas, nì marsia ospara. Or se se rena aular, nì ominader sor evoor uer aule, statheen-

win the evening] various suppers [i. e. supupers consisting of various dishes, and vaupers various persons of the company] were
upers brought in, and they held their sacred
upers conversations, or, their sacred discourupers were delivered." These suppers plainly seem to have been the love-feasts of the
ancient Christians, before described out of
upers serious suppers [i. e. supupers suppers [i. e. supupers consisting of various sistems and vaupers consistens of various sistems and vaup

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From what has been said it appears, that the agapae, or love-feasts, being suppers, were not concomitants, or appendages of the eucharist. They were intirely distinct and independent things, celebrated about twelve hours after the eucharist. This may be farther confirm'd by observing, that fustin Martyr, in his account of the publick worship of the church, and particularly of the eucharist, does not say one word of the agapae, or love-feasts, as tack'd to it either before or after.

As to the time of their continuance in the church, we have already seen, from St. Jude, Tertullian, Cyprian, Pliny, and Lu-

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cian,

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cian, that they were in use in the three first centuries. To which I now add some other authors that have mention'd them, though without describing them. Clement of Alexandria, in the end of the second century, fays, " That the Carpocratian suppers ought not to be called agapae: and that the Jacred agapae were not made for luxury. They were continued in the days of Jerom and Austin, in the end of the fourth century. P Jerom mentions some proud women, who make proclamation when they invite people to a love-feast, Austin fays; " We do not borrow our " love-feasts from the facrifies of the Gentiles. Our love-feasts feed the poor." About the same time, perhaps, the constitutions were written; in which there is this order; " If any determine to invite el-

p. 4:0. Paris. 1641.

The ayamne the nysagueene nuder loss nat Cours guoes naduceisoves. Paedag. lib. ii. p. 141. See the context before and after.

P Cum ad agapen vocaverint, praeco conducitur. Ad Eustoc. de custod. Virgin. Epist. xxii. p. 286. D. Pa-

9 Nec sacrificia eorum [gentium] vertimus in agapes. -Agapes enim nostrae pauperes pascunt. Contra Faustum

Manich. lib. xx. cap. xx.

[&]quot; Ou yag ayamny emoun" av eywys Thy ourehously auτων, scilicet Καρποκραβιανών δειπνα. Stromat. lib. iii.

Tois es ayarny noi doxny, we o nuero wronast, wegaiesusvois naken mesoculseas, no smisavan oi diakovoi θλιδομενην, αυ η πλεισακις σεμπεροφαν. Lib. ii. cap. xxviii. \$. 24I.

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t Oυ Sei — καλεμενους εις αγαπην μεςη σιζειν. Can. xxvii.

¹ Ει τις καλαφεςνοιη των εκ πισεως αγαπας ποι ενίαν, και δια τιμην τε κυειε συγκαλενθων τες αδελεες, κ) μη εθελοι κοινωνων ταις κλησεσι δια το εξευθελίζων το γινων μενον, αναθεμα εςω. Can. xi.

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" churches; and that Christians should not " eat in the house of God "." The comparing these two canons together, sufficiently shews, that this council did not abolish the love-feasts, but only banish'd them from the churches, and still allow'd them in private houses. The third council of Carthage, in the end of the fourth century, ordains, that " * no bishops, or " clergymen, should feast in the church, " unless travellers, who, in a case of ne-" ceffity, may take some refreshment there. " And that the people also should be re-" strained from such feasts as much as " poffible." This canon is repeated, word by word, by the African council, in the beginning of the fifth century, Can. IX. These canons did not abolish the love-feasts, nor so much as intirely banish them from the churches, but allow'd them there in a case of necessity; and supposed that the people would not yet wholly refrain from them. The council of Auxerre, in the beginning of the seventh century, decreed,

ου δει εν τοις κυειακοις, η εν ταις εκκλησιαις τας λεγομενας αγαπας σοιεν, και εν τω οικω τε θεε εσθιεν. Can. xxviii.

^{*} Ut nulli episcopi vel clerici in ecclesia conviventu;, nisi forte transeuntes bospitiorum necessitate illic resiciantur. Populi etiam ab hujusmodi conviviis, quantum sieri potest, prohibeantur. Can. xxx.

y Non licet-convivia in ecclesia praeparare, Concilii

Antistodorens. Can. ix.

² Oli 8 δει καλαφενών των εκ σιτεως αγαπας σοιενίων, και συγκαλενίων τες αδελφες μη σοιών δε ταυίας εν εκκλησια, επώ αφοειζονίαι, μης δε αιρών μερη εν αυίαις και οι οι εξευικίζονες ταυίας, και μη κοινωνενίες ταις κλησεσιν αναθεμαλίζοναι. Synopsis canonum, apud Justel. Biblioth, Juris canonic. Tom. 11. p. 755. Can. XXX.

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" are made; and that men ought not to "take out portions for themselves at love"feasts a." How far these passages of Photius and Arsenius will imply, that the love-seasts continued in their times in private houses, I leave the reader to judge. I can find no account of the time when they were abolish'd. For as to what we shall soon have occasion to cite from Chryfoltom, Pelagius, Oecumenius, Theophylast, and Zonaras, it only relates to the celebrating the love-seasts in churches: which they justly speak of as an ancient and obsolete custom.

I did not name Minucius Felix in his place, because it is not certain that he means the agapae: though I am inclined to think he does, when he says; "b We celebrate feasts which are not only

" chaste, but sober. For we do not in" dulge our selves in banqueting, or hold

" drinking matches: but we temper our

" cheerfulness with gravity."

It has been thought by many, that St. Paul speaks of the agapae, or love-feasts,

Nec enim indulgemus epulis, aut convivium mero ducimus; sed gravitate hilaritatem temperamus, p. 308, 310. Edit.

Ouzel, Lugd, Bal, 1672.

Titul. v. cap. ii, iii. apud gustel. p. 916, 917.

the Ancient CHRISTIANS. 251 when he reproves the Corinthians for their eating one before another, and for that one was bungry, and another fill'd, I Cor. The ancient commentators x1. 17, &c. apprehended that the Corinthians held their love-feafts immediately after the Lord's supper was finish'd; and that the disorders reproved by the apostle, were then committed. Chrysostom fays, that "c the Corin-" thians, when the worship was ended, " after the participation of the facrament, " all fat down to a common feast, to " which the rich brought the food, and " invited the poor and needy; and they " did all eat together." But after some time, this custom was abused, at the time when St. Paul wrote the epistle. Theophylast gives the same account. " d The Co-" rinthians (says he) on certain days, feast-" ed together after they had received the " facrament. The rich brought the food, " and invited, and fed the poor." Pelagius was in the same sentiments, saying;

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Τος οις ταυία εγεατεν ο αποςολος — της σιωαξεως απας ισθεισης μεία την των μυς η ειων κοινωνιαν, επι κοινην ωανίες η εσαν ευωχιαν, των μεν πλείεν ων φεργίων τα εδεσμαία, των δε πενομενων και εδεν εχονίων υπες αυτων καλεμενων, και κοινη πανίων ες ιωμενων. Αλλ' υς ερον και τείο διεφθας το εθ . In 1 Cor. Homil. xxvii. initio.

d — Εν Κοευθω καζα τινας gnlas ημερας, εος λιες ισως, κοινη ευωχείζο μελα το μελαλαβείν των μυσηριών, μο τ. λ. in I Cor. xi. 17.

" When the Christians came together in " the church, they offer'd their oblations " separately; and whatever remained of " the oblations, after the communion, they " did there eat up at a common supper." Oecumenius, in his comment on the same chapter, almost transcribes Chrysoftom's account; as does Zonaras also in his notes on the canon of the fynod of Gangra. same Oecumenius, in another place, expresly calls these feasts at Corintb, by the name of agapae. Commenting on the 12th verse of Jude, (These are spots in your lovefeasts) he says; "f At that time there were " tables prepared in the churches (as Paul " faith in his epistle to the Corintbians) " which were also call'd agapae, or love-" feasts." From all these passages put together, it is evident, that these ancient commentators imagin'd, that the disorders committed at Corinth, were not at the Lord's supper, but at a love-feast, which fucceeded it immediately, before the people were retired. But they feem to be mistaken in two circumstances, viz. in

Ησαν ελι καλα τον χρονον εκεινον εν ταις εκκλησιαις γινομεναι τραπεζαι, ως και Παυλ Φ φησιν εν τη πεος Κο-

evilies, as nai ayanas enahev.

In ecclesia convenientes oblationes suas separatim offerebant, et post communionem quaecunque eis de sacrificiis superfuissent illic in ecclesia communem coenam comedentes, pariter consumebant. In 1 Cor. xi. 20. Inter Opp. Hieronymi.

the Ancient CHRISTIANS. 253 thinking that the love-feasts did immediately succeed the eucharist; (fince, as was before proved, there intervened almost twelve hours between them) and in imagining, that St. Paul accuses the Corinthians of disorders committed at a lovefealt: for by reading the apostle himself no fuch thing can be discover'd. It seems more than probable, that the Corinthians then celebrated no feast at all but the eucharift, and that in celebrating the eucharist it self, they were guilty of the disorders charged upon them by the apostle. When each brought his own supper, it was with a professed design to celebrate the eucharist. But, says the apostle; When ye come together into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper, i. e. this does not make it to be the Lord's supper. So that, according to the apostle, they did not, at that time, eat the Lord's supper at all, though they professed and pretended so to do. What they did eat ought to be look'd upon as their own supper, because they eat separately: whereas the Lord's supper is a common meal for the whole church. If this disorder had happen'd at another feast, either before or after the Lord's supper, the apostle could not have charged them (as now he does) with not eating the Lord's supper. Besides, what was it which the apostle says the Corinthians did eat and

drink

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drink unworthily? Was it not the bread and the cup at the Lord's Supper? Hear his own words: Whosoever shall eat the bread, or drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, ver. 27. He does not charge them with any unworthy behaviour at a love-feast, but with unworthily eating the eucharistical bread it self, and unworthily drinking the eucharistical cup it self. The apostle charges them afterward, as not discerning the Lord's body, ver. 29. But furely it was no fault not to discern the Lord's body at a love-feast, which was never appointed, or intended to shew forth his death. But it was a fault not to do it at the Lord's supper; and it was a fault which could only be committed there. confiderations feem to make it very evident, that the diforders cenfured in the Corinthians, were committed at the Lord's supper it self; and that it cannot be discover'd from St. Paul, that they held a lovefeast, either before or after it. So that nothing relating to the love-feafts can be learn'd from St. Paul.

From the foregoing account it appears, that the oldest custom was, to celebrate the love-feasts in the church, towards the evening: and this custom continued till about the middle of the fourth century. After that, they were very little observed

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the Ancient CHRISTIANS. 255 in churches; tho' they were still allow'd in private houses. The custom seems to have spread it self into all places where Christians lived: for the persons before cited, who speak of them, lived in different countries, and at great distances from one another.

I cannot find that the Christians look'd upon their love-feasts as religious, or divine institutions, like the Lord's supper. If they had, their councils would no more have banish'd them out of the churches

than the Lord's supper it self.

As to the original and occasion of their institution, we have nothing certain. The best conjecture I know, is that of Chryso-stom, who says; " As the three thousand, who believed in the beginning, did all feast together, and had all things in common; so it was also when the apo"stee this epistle to the Corinthians, though not with the same decorum."
Theophylast was in the same sentiment: he says; " As believers, in the beginning, "had all things common, and did feast

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" Ωσπερ οι εν αρχη σισευσανίες, κοινα σανία εχονίες κοινη εσιωνίο είω, καία τινα μιμησιν τείων, ει και μη ακειδη, εν Κοεινθω, Θε. as cited before Note (°.) In 'Cor. xi. 17.

δ Καθαπερ επι των τεισχιλιών των εξ αρχης πισευσαντων κοινη σανζες εσιωνζο, και κοινα σανζα εκεκληνζο ελω και τοξε οξε ταυζα εχες ξεν ο αποσολΦ εχενεζο, εχ ελω μεν μεζα ακειδείας. In 1 Cor. Homil. xxvii.

" together; so there was some resemblance " of this at Corinth, though not with the " like decorum." Now, though I cannot suppose with these learned writers, that the disorders for which the apostle blames the Corinthians, were committed at a love-feast, but think they were committed at the Lord's supper it self: yet it is natural enough to believe, that the account given by them of the original of the lovefeasts, is the truth. When the Christians had, in the beginning, all things common, it could not well be avoided, but that they must feast together at the common meal. And these common feasts, or love-feasts, continued in the church long after the Christians ceased to have all things in common, i. e. long after the difuse of that custom, which was the original occasion of them. By their love-feasts the primitive Christians manifested their charity towards one another, particularly toward the poor, the fatherless, and the widows: whom, though we do not entertain in the same manner, yet we are bound to relieve and help, as God, from time to time, does prosper us.

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DISCOURSE VII.

Of the End of this World.

THE doctrine of the holy scripture concerning the end of this world, is very plain, full, and express. The time will come when this earth, and all things in it, shall be burn'd up, when the propagation of mankind shall be finish'd, when this present state of things shall cease intirely, and at once, and when all mankind shall be in a future state. At present, some are in this world, others not yet born, and past generations are in another world. But at the end of the world, they hall all, without exception, be, at the ame time, in the future world. Of this end of the world, there shall be no previous figns and tokens for any confiderable time before hand. Christ will come to judgment when he shall be least expected. Of that day and hour (said our Saviour) knoweth no one, but my Father only. as the days of Noah were, so shall also the soming of the Jon of man be. __ In Juch an bour

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bour as you think not, the Son of man cometh, Matt. xxIv. 36, 37, 44. And St. Paul says; The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and Safety, then Sudden destru-Etion cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, 1 Theff. v. 2, 3. Wherefore we are not to look for any previous figns and tokens of the end of the world. Accordingly there does not appear to be, in the course of things, any tendency toward a diffolution of the world. There is no appearance of its growing old, or runing to decay. The fun gives as much light and heat as ever: the earth moves on in the same path as it has done, at least, ever fince the deluge; and is as fruitful as in any preceding age. Mankind, and other animals, increase and multiply in the same manner as from the beginning. As to their number, mankind continually increafes a little in every generation: and as to knowledge, wisdom, and arts, they are fo far from growing old, that they are making vast improvements from day to day: and as to length of life, they are the fame as they have been ever fince the days of David. We see the regular and uninterrupted succession of day and night, fpring, summer, autumn, and winter. We cannot then perceive any natural fign of the world's decaying, and coming to an end.

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Of the END of this WORLD. 259

end. For any thing we can fee in the world it felf, it may continue on in the fame condition as now, for ten thousand

years longer, and even to eternity.

indeed, have well ar-Philosophers, gued against the atheists, that, upon the atheistic scheme, this world cannot last for ever: the reason is; because, according to the atheists, there is no God to uphold and preserve it. Light is a body, and a part of the substance of the sun, which streams or issues forth from it. So that the fun. by fending us light, must naturally grow less and less every day: though its decrease is so very slow, and small, especially confidering its vast bulk, that it may not be perceivable in ten thousand ages. Yet still, if the fun does, in ever so small a proportion, grow less and cooler continually, as Dr. Cheyne, and other good writers against the atheists have observed; then, in an infinite number of years, it would diminish to nothing, and be extinct. This feems to be just reasoning upon the atheistic supposition, that there is no God: but if there be as most undoubtedly there is) a God who made the world, and has preferved it hitherto; then the confideration of the fun's every day losing some of its light, which never returns back to it, will not at all prove, that the fun may not last for ever: ince God, who made it, may continually S 2

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recruit it by his almighty power, as fast as it naturally tends to decay. So that they who believe there is an almighty Maker and Preserver of the world, cannot possibly prove by the nature and appearances of things, that this world shall come to an end. Mere nature teaches no such thing. To all outward appearance, the world is as likely to continue in its present condition and circumstances to all eternity, as it is to remain for one year longer. No man can prove, from any thing be sees in it, that it is drawing to a conclusion.

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From hence it is easy to infer, that it is impossible to prove a future state by mere unassisted reason, without the bible. mere reason cannot prove, that this world shall have an end; furely then it cannot possibly prove, that another world shall succeed it. It is true, that men die, one generation after another, and so pass into another state. In that state God can make the separate foul happy or miserable to all eternity: and he might, if he pleas'd, continue on this present world to run parallel with the state of separate souls, to all eternity also. In which case all mankind would never be at once all together in another state; but some in that, and fome in the present world, and paffing from hence into the other, to all eternity. This is a scheme which, I suppose, no one has, or will entertain: and

Of the END of this WORLD. 261 and therefore I shall have no occasion to regard it in this discourse. They who imagine they can prove a future state from mere reason, are well persuaded that this world, and the present state of things in it, shall at once intirely cease, and come to an end; and that the time is coming, when mankind shall not be as now, some in this world, and fome in another, and fome unborn; but when there shall be no more to be born, when not one shall be left upon this earth; but when all of them, without exception, shall exist in that future world, which shall succeed the present. Men of this persuasion would do well to hew us how they can, by mere unaffifted reason, prove a future state, when they cannot prove, by natural arguments, that this world shall have a conclusion.

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But above all, it is impossible for those men to prove these things, who believe that when men die, their souls fall asleep, and shall continue to sleep till the resurrection. These men expect no future state till the bodies of all mankind shall at once be raised from the dead. If such men will prove a suture state by natural arguments, they must, by natural arguments, without the help of the bible, prove the suture resurrection: and, in order to this, they must, from the mere light of nature alone, prove, that the moral attributes of God oblige

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him to put an end to the propagation of mankind, and to this present world. But it seems not very easy to find out sufficient arguments for this purpose. Nay, those that argue from reason for a future state, can as easily invent arguments, and produce reasons to prove, from God's moral perfections, that it is his defign to continue this world in its present state for I own these arguments and reasons would have no force in them; and that, for the very same reason, as there is no force in the natural arguments for a future state, viz. Because we cannot posfibly dive into the reasons of the divine conduct, and that upon the whole may be most wife and fit, which, to our partial view of things, may feem to be improper. How could men know, without a revelation, that God does not fee fufficient reasons to continue on this world, and mankind in it, in their present circumstances, to all eternity? Will any arguments from the mere light of nature prove, that the world shall have an end a thousand years hence, without proving as well, that it should have had an end a thousand years ago? Would not men argue, that as God makes nothing in vain, fo, in particular, he did not give to mankind the power of propagating the species in vain? As the present generation has this

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Of the END of this WORLD. 263 this power, it cannot be supposed (they might fay) that this shall be the last generation; fince then this power would have been given them in vain. The same may be said, as far as reason can discover, of every future generation of men also. If, indeed, in any time to come, there should be born a whole generation of men without the power of propagating their species; this would be an evident indication of the will of God, that the world should foon have a period. But how should men suspect, without a revelation, that the world shall have an end, as long as mankind have a power of continuing their kind? Does it not so long appear to be the divine intention, that it should be continued? Would any one imagine, unless God had revealed it, that he will put an end to this world, at a time wherein all things are in as good circumstances as they are at present, when the world does not appear to be grown old, and when all things are as capable of continuance as now? Would any one, from nature, suspect, that when the earth is full flock'd with inhabitants, particularly with men, and all other animals propagating their kinds, God will, on a fudden, cut them off all at once, and hut up this scene of things? Would not these things be said to be very improbable in the eye of human reason? How then will

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will any one prove, from nature alone, that this world shall have an end?

Besides, if men think they can prove this, it is proper to ask, When the time of the end of the world shall be? As God has continued this world for almost fix thousand years already, notwithstanding the provoking wickedness of men; how can we know but he may continue it for fix millions of ages more, or for any number of ages short of eternity? If so, then let it be consider'd, what small satisfaction arises from the natural arguments for a future state, upon the pretty common supposition, that the souls of men departed fleep till the resurrection? All that those arguments pretend to prove, is this, viz. That our departed fouls shall not sleep for ever: but they may sleep on for millions of millions of ages, and then awake, and injoy just such a measure and duration of happiness (be it long or short, much or little) as is necessary to compensate for the undeserved misery we indured in this life; and then we must go to sleep again, and fleep away for ever. If a day's happiness in the future world, be sufficient to over-balance all that we have fuffer'd here, without our own fault and deferving; the natural argument for a future state now pretends to prove no more than a fingle day's happiness for us in the future state; and and as that fingle day may not come for these millions of millions of ages, the prospect of happiness, at so vast a distance, and that shall last but for one day, cannot now afford us much consolation. Thus inconsiderable and useless, to almost every man in the world, are the natural arguments for a future state of happiness: for almost every man in the world has injoy'd undeserved bappiness enough in this life, to over-balance his undeserved sufferings; for whom therefore the natural arguments will not prove a future state of happiness at all.

When I confider these things, how immensely distant, and exceedingly short the future happiness may be, which nature promises, I cannot but most thankfully adore the infinite grace of God in bringing life and immortality to light by the gospel; wherein he has assured us, that when good men shall be abjent from the body, they shall be present with the Lord; that their bodies shall be raised from the dead in glory and immortality; that there shall be new beavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness; that Christ will acquit them at the great day; and that they shall ever be with the Lord Jesus, and with the God and Father of all, who will be their portion, their happiness, and their God to all eternity. One cannot

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but wish, that the revelation of these things may appear to be divine, that so we may be able to depend upon it, and to comfort our selves with the expectation of them. It is worth our while to examine the evidences of the gospel, with care and impartiality, that we may see its truth, and have a solid foundation for hope and joy.

DISCOURSE VIII.

The Scripture - Doctrine of Circumcision and Baptism.

HE treating of circumcision and baptism together in the same discourse, is no way disagreeable upon any account; and is very needful to illustrate and establish the true doctrine of baptism. And in order the better to understand the nature, defign, and use of both, it will be necessary to consider the nature and extent of the covenant, which God made with Abraham, and with his feed (Genesis, xvII. 2-14.) whereof circumcifion was a token and feal. What is needful to be observed, concerning this Abrahamic covenant, circumcision and baptism, may, I judge, most conveniently be deliver'd in the following propositions.

I. The covenant made with Abraham, and with his feed, (Gen. xvII. 2—14.) was the covenant of grace. The promise therein made on God's part, is, I will be a God

God to thee, and to thy feed after thee, ver. 7. This promise particularly includes in it a resurrection from the dead, as our Saviour expresly testifies, Matt. XXII. 31, 32. As touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read, that which was spoken unto you by God, saying; I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. And the apostle farther assures us, that the promise of being any one's God, includes eternal life and bleffedness in the world to come, Heb. xr. 16. Now they defire a better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city, even the heavenly Jerusalem, Chap. XII. 22. How it is that this promise of being any one's God, includes a promise of a bleffed refurrection, and of eternal life, I have already shewn in my note on Heb. x1. 16. Supplement to Mr. Peirce on the Hebrews, p. 29. and more at large in my second volume of notes and discourses, p. 214-246. to which I have nothing to add. From the nature of this covenant then it is evident, that it is a covenant of grace: fince herein falvation is offer'd to such as have sinned, but now repent, and do imperfectly, though fincerely obey the commandments of God for the time to come: for this is the highest character

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feed. Agreeably to this the apostle calls circumcision, which was the seal of this covenant, A seal of the righteousness of faith, Rom. IV. II. The covenant then it self made over a righteousness of faith to Abraham, and to his seed, i. e. it justified them upon the account of their faith, notwithstanding the desects of their sincere obedience. It gave to penitent believers a title to all the same eternal reward of happiness and glory, as they should have inherited, if they had been perfectly righteous: which is the whole nature of the covenant of grace.

At the same time God promised to the natural posterity of Abraham, all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, Gen. xvii. 8. which promise (by the way) will be punctually sulfilled: since, though the Jews, for their sins, were banish'd from Canaan, for seventy years, in the time of Daniel, and have now, for their murdering the Messia, been again banish'd for almost seventeen hundred years; yet they shall all, both the two tribes, and the ten, upon their conversion, be restor'd at length, to their own land, and dwell therein for ever, i. e. to the end of this world, as God has expressly promis'd,

Ezek, XXXVII. 21-28.

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II. This Abrahamic covenant was not made with all Abraham's posterity, but only with those of them who descended from Isaac by Jacob. Neither of the promises extended to Ishmael, the sons of Keturab, or Esau. Or, if the covenant was originally intended for them, yet they foon turn'd afide to idolatry, broke covenant with God, and he thereupon ceas'd to be their God. Which soever of these two cases is allow'd, it will equally serve my purpose, to shew, that circumcision. practised by Ishmael, Esau, and their postery, is not a token of the divine covenant, or an evidence that the Almighty is their God. This is necessary to be particularly observed, that we may be sensible of the confistency of these two affertions, viz. That circumcifion was a feal of God's covenant to the Jews; and yet it was not so to other children of Abraham.

It feems to have been this; That God foreseeing his apostasy, never intended the covenant for him. It is evident, that whatever was the reason of his being rejected, and Isaac's being chosen, it was not upon the account of Ishmael's being born of a concubine or bond-woman: since facob's children, by his maids, Zilpah, and Bilbah, were made equal to the children of

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of Leab, and Rachel; and fince Efau was rejected, though born of the same mother with Jacob. Though Ishmael was a fon of Abraham, as much as Isaac was, yet Ishmael was not intitled to either promise of the covenant. God was not his God. and Canaan was not his country: and these bleffings seem never to have been intended for him. The original promise, that Abraham should be the father of many nations, and that kings should come out of him (Gen. xvII. 4, 5, 6.) was limitted to Sarah's posterity. Sarah was to become nations, and kings of people were to be of ber, ver. 16. And when Abraham faid to God, O that Ishmael might live before thee ! God answer'd, Sarah shall have a son, Isaac, and I will establish my covenant with him [not with Ishmael] and with his feed. And as for Ishmael [though I have not establish'd my covenant with him, as with Isaac, yet I have beard thee. I will bless Ishmael, and multiply him: twelve princes shall be beget, and I will make him a great nation. But I will establish my covenant [not with Ishmael, but] with Isaac, ver. 18 -- 21. Upon this, Abraham circumcifed all the males in his house, and Ishmael among the rest, ver. 23, 25. Then Ishmael, and all Abrabam's male slaves, if they were fincere, were in covenant with God, and he was their

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their God. But apostasy cast them again out of covenant. And God foreseeing Ishmael's apostasy, did not intend the covenant for him. Accordingly Ishmael was foon rejected, God approving Sarab's refolution, cast out the bond-woman, and her son Ishmael: be shall not be heir with Isaac. Hereupon God said to Abraham, In Isaac Shall thy feed be called, Gen. XXI. 10—12. As Ishmael was thus excluded the covenant; fo he was not permitted to dwell in Canaan, which was allotted for the seed of Abraham. And after Isaac was grown, the covenant was renew'd with him, without taking any notice of Ishmael, Gen. xx11. 17, 18.

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As Canaan was not Ishmael's country, fo the Lord was not bis God, after his apostafy. Hagar took a wife for her son Ishmael, out of the idolatrous land of Egypt, Gen. XXI. 21. And it is natural to think, that when he lived at a distance from Abraham, and had an idolatrous wife, he fuffer'd her (as Solomon did his wives) to lead him into idolatry. Whereupon the Almighty could no longer be his God, or the God of his feed. Accordingly the posterity of Ishmael were so far from being reputed the people of God, that they are described as enemies to God, and to his people, Pfal. LXXXIII. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6. O God, thine enemies make a tumult ____they bave CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. 273
have taken crafty counsel against thy
people — they are confederate against
thee: the tabernacles of Edom and the Ishmaelites, &c.

This rejection of Ishmael is taken notice of by the apostle, Gal. 1v. 29, 30, 31. with a design to shew, that as Ishmael persecuted Isaac (who was in covenant with God, and the child that was to inherit the promise made to Abraham) and was, upon that account, cast out of God's covenant: so the unbelieving fews, who persecuted the church of Christ, were cast out of the divine covenant also. That discourse of the apostle manifestly is built on the supposition, that either the Abrahamic covenant was never intended for Ishmael, or, at least, that Ishmael cast himself out of covenant, while Isaac remain'd the heir of it.

2. Abraham's children by Keturah, did not inherit with Isaac, but were sent away in Abraham's life-time from Isaac, into the East country, into Arabia, Gen.

XXV. 1—6. And so they were not intitled even to the temporal promise of the covenant, the promise of having Canaan for their habitation: and, no doubt, they went astray into idolatry, like other nations around them, and so the Lord was not their God.

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3. Esau also was rejected from being one of God's people. When he was first circumcifed, he was as much in covenant with God, as Jacob or Isaac. But as he despised, and sold his birth-right, so he forfook the true God; as we have reason to suppose from his marrying idolatrous wives, Gen. xxxv1. 2. In prospect of this, the land of Canaan, and the bleffing of Abrabam, were given to Jacob, without the least thought of Esau, Gen. xxvIII. 1, 3, 4, 13, 14. XXXV. 11, 12. Accordingly Efau did not dwell in the land of Promise, but in mount Seir, while Jacob dwelt in Canaan, Gen. xxxvi. 6, 7, 8. xxxvii. i. And the Edomites, the posterity of E/au, are always described as an idolatrous people, hated of God, and enemies to his people. O God (fays the Pfalmist) -thine enemies make a tumult - the tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites, &c. Pfal. LXXXIII. 1, 2, 6. Obadiah declares the anger of God against them; Esau (says he) shall be cut off for ever: but upon Sion shall be deliverance. The house of Jacob shall be fire, and the house of Esau for stubble. -- And there shall not be any remaining of the house of They of the South shall possess the mount of Elau, ver. 9, 10, 17, 18, 19. And the prophet Malachi introduces God as saying, I loved Jacob, but hated Esau, a peo-

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CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. 275

people against whom the Lord bath indigna-

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From all this it appears, either that the covenant, which God made with Abraham, was not at first intended for all his posterity; or else, that Ishmael, Esau, and the sons of Keturah, lost their interest in it. after they grew up, by means of their revolting to idolatry. And then circumcifion could be no token of God's covenant with their feed, because they had cast themselves out of that covenant. Upon their apostasy, the Almighty ceas'd to be their God, and they ceased to be his people: fo that their continuing to practife circumcifion could not possibly be a sign of their being still in covenant with God. And yet, at the same time, circumcision might be, as in fact it was, a leal of God's covenant with the Fews. But if any one of them apostatized, his circumcision could no longer avail him: he thereupon also ceas'd to be one of God's people. Hosea, 1. 9.

venant of grace made with Abraham by means of circumcision. In this covenant, that which was required on the part of Abraham, and of his seed, was, that every male child among them should be circumcised (for a token of the covenant between God and them, and as a token of this

his being their God) at eight days old. And the male-child, that was not circumcifed on the eighth day, was to be cut off, as having broken the covenant: (for those words, on the eighth day, should be inserted in the 14th verse, and the verse be read thus; The uncircumcifed man-child, whose sless of his foreskin is not circumcifed on the eighth day, that soul shall be cut off from his people: he hath broken my covenant; as appears from the Samaritan text, the Greek and Samaritan versions, and the citations of Philo, Justin, and Origen.)

Gen. xv11. 9-14.

From hence it appears, that Abraham's feed, while they were infants, and no more than eight days old, were in covenant with God: he was their God, and stood ingaged to give them a portion in the resurrection, and in the city of the heavenly Jerusalem. The scripture expresly says, that the circumcifing an infant was a token of the covenant between God and him, ver. 11. i.e. it was a token of the whole covenant, both of the promise of eternal life, and of the land of Canaan. There is not the least hint given, as if circumcifion was a token of both these promises to the adult, and only of the promise of Canaan to infants. But the whole discourse goes upon the supposition, that the circumcision of infants was a token of the whole and intire covenant,

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CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. 277 nant, viz. that they should inherit Canaan, and have the Lord for their God, to give them eternal life. Accordingly the promifes made in this covenant to circumcifed infants must be understood in the same manner as the temporal promise therein made to the posterity of Abrabam: that is to fay, As Abraham's posterity were, by virtue of this covenant, to have the land of Canaan for an everlasting possesfion, provided they did not break covenant with God, and apostatise from him (for if they did, he would banish them from thence, as at this day:) fo circumcifed infants should certainly, by virtue of this covenant, have the Almighty for their God, and so be brought to heaven, provided they did not afterwards apostatile from God's covenant. And forasmuch as they were not capable of this apostasy, as long as they remained infants, i.e. as long as they could not be accounted moral agents, it is certain, that if they had died in their infancy, they should have been partakers of that bleffed refurrection, and of all that eternal happiness of the future world, which are fignified by that divine and comprehensive promise, I will be their God.

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It appears now, that there is a plain and good meaning to this expression, That infants are in covenant with God. There was a real

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covenant between God and circumcifed infants, as the scripture expresly says. There was a promise made to them on God's part, and a condition to be perform'd on theirs. The condition required on their part was, that they should be circumcifed on the eighth day after their birth: and infants were fully as capable of receiving this fign of the covenant, as the adult were. The promise made to circumcised infants on God's part, was, that he would be their God, i. e. as was proved under the first proposition, that he would vouchsafe them a resurrection and eternal life. of this also infants were as capable as the adult. And besides this, they were capable of being protected and provided for in this life by God, as his own, and of receiving from him all those bleffings, which were needful for them. So that our speaking of infants being in covenant with God, is as intelligible as it is scriptural.

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IV. Such as were not circumcifed, were not in this covenant, and had not the Almighty for their God. This is evident from many passages of the holy scripture. God himself expresly says; Gen. xvII. 14. The uncircumcifed man-child, whose slesh of his foreskin is not circumcifed on the eighth day, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant; and conse-

CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. confequently has no interest in the bleffing of it, of having the Lord for his God to beflow eternal life upon him. Answerably, Heathens, and all uncircumcifed persons were to be kept out of God's sanctuary, as persons whose presence there would defile it: and they were not to be present at the offering of the facrifices, as God fays, Ezek. XLIV. 6, 7. Thus faith the Lord God, O ye house of Israel, Let it suffice you of all your abominations, in that ye have brought strangers, uncircumcised in beart, and uncircumcifed in flesh, to be in my fanctuary, to pollute it, even my boufe, when ye offer my bread, the fat, and the blood, and ye a have broken my covenant, because of all your abominations. ably hereto we find, that a stranger, till he was circumcifed, was not allow'd to have communion with the Israelites in eating of the passover, Exod. XII. 43, 44. So that the uncircumcifed were not to affociate with God's people in his worship, because they were not of this number, had not the Lord for their God, and were not in covenant with him: that is, according to the meaning of that promife, I will be a God to them; the uncircumcifed were not

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The corrupted Hebrew and Chaldee read, they; but the Latin, Greek, Syriac, and Arabic versions read, ye, as the fense, and the context, evidently require.

to inherit the heavenly Jerusalem; God

did not prepare the city for them.

The New Testament plainly teaches the same doctrine; as it affures us, that the uncircumcised were not justified till faith came, till the Messiab was glorified, and had fent his gospel to the Gentiles. The uncircumcifed are now justified by faith, as the apostle says, Rom. 111. 20, 21, 22, 30. By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified. But now the righteousness of God without the law, is manifested --- even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of fesus Christ, unto all, and upon all them that believe: -- It is one God, who shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcifion through faith. From hence it appears, that before Christ came, the uncircumcifed could not be justified at all. For neither they nor the circumcifed themselves could be justified by the law, which insisted on perfect obedience; nor could they be justified by faith, before faith came. Again, if we ask, How the uncircumcifed Gentiles became the children of God? The anfwer is, Through faith in Jesus Christ, Gal. 111. 26. And their faith now constitutes them the children of God, because faith is now come, ver. 25. i. e. because now under the gospel, faith is appointed to be the condition of justification, and of obtaining eternal life. From whence it is easy to infer, that before that time, the uncircumcised Gentiles could not at all be justified or faved. Farther, they who were uncircumcised, before the coming of Christ, were dead in their fins, and not forgiven, as it is written, Coloff. 11. 13. You Gentiles, being dead in your fins (i. e. condemn'd to death upon the account of your fins, without hope of a resurrection) and in the uncircumcifion of your flesh (i.e. being dead, or condemned to death, without hope of a refurrecton, because you were uncircumcised) bath God quicken'd together with Christ (i. e. assured you of a glorious resurrection, even as he has raifed Christ already) baving forgiven you all trespasses. So that before these uncircumcifed Gentiles became Christians, they were not forgiven, and could not obtain a blessed resurrection. But most express to this purpose is what the apostle says, Ephes. 11. 11, 12. Remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcifion, - that at that time (when ye were uncircumcifed Gentiles) ye were without Christ, being aliens from the common-wealth of Israel (and consequently) strangers to the covenant's of promise (both to the covenant made with the Jews, by Moses, and to the covenant made with Abraham) having (in confequence of this) no bope, and being without

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out God in the world: fo that the Almighty was not their God, and they had no interest in him, and no hope of salvation. Whereas, if these men had been circumcised, and obedient, then they would have been interested in God, and in the covenants of promise, and so have had a solid

foundation for hope of eternal life.

It may not be improper to add, that the fame thing feems to be taught us by Ezekiel, Chap. xxx11. from ver. 18. to the end; where the uncircumcifed are often spoken of, as in a state very different from that of the heavenly Jerusalem. Particularly it is said, ver. 27. of these uncircumcifed, and that because they were uncircumcised, that their iniquities shall be upon their bones. However, I am fenfible, that the prophet does not mean, that these uncircumcised Gentiles were, or shall hereaster be turned into bell; but only that they died, and were buried in their graves, and were condemn'd to eternal sleep. Our translators did very wrong, when they used the word bell, in some of the verses now referred to: for it is evident fact, that the Hebrew word Sheel, never, throughout the whole Old Testament, fignifies any thing but the grave, as Buxtorf's Hebrew Concordance will foon convince any one that will earn to all the places where this word is found.

V. Not-

V. Notwithstanding that a man was a sincere believer, and circumcised, and so in covenant with God; yet his children, if not circumcised on the eighth day, were not in covenant with God. This appears from the former proposition, and from the several texts there alleged to confirm it; particularly from Gen. xvII. 14. which expresly says, that the man-child, who was not circumcised on the eighth day, had broken God's covenant. This would have been the case of an uncircumcised child of Abraham himself, though the sather was circumcised, and in covenant with God.

From hence it follows, either that a child was not in covenant with God, upon the account of his being born of a believing and circumcifed parent; but upon the account of his own being circumcifed; or elfe, that if he was not circumcifed on the eighth day, he was, by reason of that omission, thrust out of covenant again. Either way it is certain, that as the uncircumcifed man-child was not in covenant with God, and had him not for his God, he could have no title to a blessed resurrection, and to eternal life. The same must have been determin'd then, and now also, I suppose, concerning abortive infants: who, how-

284 The SCRIPTURE-DOCTRINE of ever, to be sure, will not suffer any torments in a future state.

VI. The reason why certain particular infants (and no others) were to be circum. cifed, was, because they belong'd, as a property, to one who was in covenant with God, and was, if a male, circumcifed. This appears from Gen. xvII. 12, 13. He that is eight days old shall be circumcifed among you, every man-child in your generations, be that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger which is not of thy feed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised. According to this command, Abraham was obliged to circumcise his slaves, and the children of his flaves, as much as his own children. It must be farther observ'd, that at the same time, Abraham, and the Jews, were not to circumcife bired fervants and foreigners without their own consent, as may be gather'd from what we read, Exod. XII. 44, 45, 48. Every man's fervant, or flave, that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall be eat of the passover. A foreigner, and a hired servant, shall not eat thereof. — - And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the Lord, let all his males

CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. 285 males be circumcised, and then let bim come near and keep it. They were to circumcise their own slaves. But foreigners and bired servants, who were not their flaves, were at liberty to circumcife themselves, and their children, or not, as they faw fit. Their submitting to circumcifion was, indeed, a term of their being admitted to partake of the passover. But if they would not be circumcifed, no one could force them to it. If they voluntarily submitted to be themselves circumcifed, then they were obliged to circumcise their own children. And all who had male-flaves under them, were obliged to circumcife them also. Thus the rule given to Abraham taught: and thus Abraham practised, Gen. xvII. 23. Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's bouse, and circumcised the stesh of their foreskin, in the self-same day, as God had faid unto him. It appears then, that the rule to determine the subjects of circumcifion was not that they were to circumcife merely their own children; but that they should circumcise all that were their property, in whom they had an absolute right, and whom they could dispose of in the world, as they saw fit. The reaion for extending the rule fo far, plainly ap-

appears to have been this, viz. That they took care of the education of their flaves, as well as of their children, equally teaching them all God's covenant, and carrying them all to the bouje of God among his worshipers. Whereas, they had no such power over strangers or hired fervants, who being not flaves, but free-men, or, at least, being not slaves to the Jews, might, for any authority the Jews had over them, dispose of themselves as they saw fit, and leave the land of Canaan, and refide in any other country, as they should choose. Suppose Abraham had clandestinely taken the child of a stranger, or of a bired servant, and had circumcifed him, without its parent's consent, or knowledge; it would not have been in Abraham's power to have educated this child in the church of God: for the child was not his property; and its parent might, as foon as he would, have removed his habitation, and bred up his child, not in the church, but in ignorance and idolatry: whereupon his circumcifion would not have answer'd any one end of its institution. Men do not say enough, or speak accurately, when they fay, that infants had a right to circumcifion, upon the account of their being born of circumcifed parents. For the right to circumcifion arose from an infant's being the property of a circumcifed person, whether

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CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. 287 ther the infant were a child by birth, an adopted son, a slave, or a child of a slave. Abraham's children had no other right to circumcifion, and to the privileges of God's covenant, but what his flaves had also equally, and in common with them. The right of both children and flaves lay equally, and intirely in their belonging to Abrabam, as his possession and property, for whose education in the church of God he could undertake. And, I suppose, it will be allow'd, in consequence of this, that if a Tewish woman, who was mistress of her felf, as a widow, or an unmarried heirefs, had male-flaves born in her house, they, as her property, would have a right to circumcifion, and being circumcifed, would be really in covenant with God.

VII. The covenant made with Abraham, and with his feed, includes, and was design'd to extend to all believers. When God promis'd to be a God to Abraham, and to his feed, St. Paul assures us, that by Abraham's feed is meant all that shall imitate the faith and virtue of Abraham, whether they be fews or Gentiles, Gal. 111. 7. Know ye therefore, that they, who are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. The expression, it must be own'd, is figurative, and only means, that though Gentile believers are not by birth, the

children of Abraham; yet in the gospel covenant, they are treated as if they were Abraham's posterity: they are admitted to all the privileges that were granted to his children: they are favour'd and regarded as if they were his feed; and therefore they are called his feed. The apostle adds, ver. 16. Now to Abraham, and to his feed, were the promises made. He saith not, and to feeds, as [if he was speaking] of many [different kinds of feeds:] but [the expression is] as [if he spake] of one [feed only in the fingular number, faying] And to thy seed, which is Christ. It is here exceedingly evident from these words themselves, that the promise, to which the apostle, in this place, refers, is no other than that, Gen. xvII. 7. I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, AND TO THY SEED after thee. These words, and to thy seed, are the very words which the apostle quotes, and comments upon. And no one, without the greatest absurdity, can suppose, that the apostle here refers to any promise, in which those words, And to thy feed, are not expresly written. For he argues from this expression, and particularly from this consideration, that the word feed, in the promise, is in the singluar number. It is very true,

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CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. 280 true, that before, in the eighth verse, the apostle cites another promise made to Abraham, viz. In thee shall all nations be blessed, Gen. x11. 3. But it is evident this cannot be the promise referred to ver. 16. before cited: because in this promise Abraham's feed is not at all mention'd. It is, indeed, promis'd, Gen. XXII. 18. In thy feed shall all the nations of the earth be blefsed. But it is likewise very plain, that the apostle, in Gal. 111. 16. did not refer to this promise; since the words of this promife are, IN thy feed: whereas the words cited by the apostle are, TO thy feed. So that it is evident St. Paul refers to the divine promise of being a God to Abraham, and TO his seed, Gen. xvII. 7. From this expression of the promise, the apostle well argues, that there were not two feeds of Abraham; but that he had but one feed in all. He had not one feed that was circumcifed, and another feed, that was uncircumcifed; not one feed that was of the law, and another feed that was of faith: but he had ONE feed only, even all believers, whether they were circumcifed or uncircumcifed, whether they were his natural posterity or not. This on E seed of Abraham, St. Paul fays, was Christ; And to thy feed, which is Christ. Where it is evident, that St. Paul did not, and could not possibly mean the fingle person of Christ.

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Christ. For, dropping the thought of his inspiration, the apostle had too much sense to argue, that because the word feed is of the fingular number; therefore it must fignify one fingle person, and no more. When therefore the apostle says, that Abraham's ONE feed is Christ, he plainly understands the word Christ, as fignifying, in this place, not only Christ the head, but also his whole body, the church; which being his body, may be confider'd as a part of his person: even as the name Abraham, fignified not only Abraham's head, but also all the members of his body. In this collective fense the word Christ, not only denotes the person of the Messiah, but also all those that are treated as if they were members of his body, i.e. all those that believe in the One God, and in the One Mediator, and that are through this Mediator united to God. It may not be amiss here to subjoin the paraphrase, which the great Mr. Locke has given of this passage, in the following words; " Now to Abraham, and " his feed, were the promises made. God

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" doth not fay, and to feeds, (4) as if he

" spoke of more seeds than one, that were " intitled to the promise upon different

" accounts; but only of one fort of men,

who, upon one fole account, were that

" feed of Abraham, which was

meant, and concern'd in the promise: 66 fo

CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. " fo that, unto thy feed, defign'd Christ, " and his mystical body, i.e. those that " became members of him by faith." To this paraphrase he subjoins the following note (4) " And to feeds. By feeds here, " St. Paul visibly means, those of faith, " and those of the works of the law, spoken " of above, ver. 9, 10. as two distinct " feeds, or descendants claiming from " Abraham." From this just account of the passage it clearly follows, that the covenant made with Abraham, Gen. XVII. 7. was intended to include all good Christians, as the feed of Abraham, to whom the Lord promised, that he would be their God.

If any one, after all that has been faid, hall still doubt, whether the word feed, Gal. 111. 16. does not fignify the one fingle person of Christ; I should desire to refer him to the apostle's use of the word in the ame discourse, ver. 29. where he says; If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's feed. This is a direct and defigned interpretation of what the apostle had said, ver. 16. There he faid, that Abraham's feed is Christ: and now he fays, that they who are Christ's, who are members of his body, are Abraham's feed: that is to fay, Christ, who is Abraham's seed, is the perfon of Christ, and all his members together. Agreeably to this, the same apostle stiles

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Riles Abraham, The father of all that believe, though they are uncircumcifed; and the father of the circumcifed, provided they imitate his faith, Rom. IV. 11, 12. These believers, whether circumcised or not, the apostle in the next verse speaks of again as the one feed of Abraham, faying. The promise that he should be the heir of the world was not to Abraham, or to his feed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. And to the same purpose he says, ver. 16. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to All the seed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.

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From these passages it appears, that the One feed of Abraham is the Christian church; and that the promise made to his feed, Gen. XVII. 7. was originally intended for the Christian church, and is applicable to it, not by way of allegory, analogy, or parity of reason, but directly and immediately; while Abraham's natural posterity were, most of them, cut off from this privilege, because of their unbelief, Rom. XI. 20. This is the Heb. IV. 6. more easy to be admitted, because the Abrahamic covenant, all along from the very first institution of it, included fuch as were not (as well as those that were

Were) Abraham's natural posterity, viz. Proselyted Gentiles, slaves, and their infants.

This matter may be farther confirmed from the apostle's discourse, Rom. 1x. 6, &c. where the words ought to have been render'd (as I have shewn, Vol. I. p. 20.) thus; Not that the award of God bath taken no effect: for all they that descend from Ifrael, are not Ifrael; neither that all, who are the children [of Abraham by birth] are the feed of Abraham [to whom the Almighty promised to be a God.] But the children of the promise [i.e. besides the believing Jews, the believing Gentiles, who are Abraham's children, not by birth, but by virtue of the divine promise of making them his seed] are counted for the feed of Abraham. So that believers now belong to the very same covenant and church, as Abraham did of old. This is yet more strongly expressed, Rom. II. 17, &c. where St. Paul represents the Abrahamic church as an olive-tree, the circumcised Jews, as heretosore, branches of it, though afterward cut off for their unbelief, and the Gentiles, who believe, as grafted into the very same olive-tree.

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From all these things it is evident, that the Christian church is not a new church, but the old Abrahamic church inlarged, and extended to comprehend the believing

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Gentiles, as it was before intended and promised it should be. All good men, and all their circumcifed infants among the Yervs, all along pertained to this church. And upon Christ's ascension into heaven, all believers among the uncircumcifed Gentiles, together with their baptised infants, are taken into the same church, and have an equal share in the promises and blesfings of the Abrabamic (which is, indeed, the Christian) covenant. The Christian church is founded upon the covenant made with Abraham and his feed; which includes. and was defign'd to extend to all believers. It will be needful to add, as a distinct head, that the more notice may be taken of it, that

VIII. The covenant made with Abrabam, and with his feed, is still in force. This is implied in what has been already faid: but it ought to be directly and particularly demonstrated. It is expresly afferted by the apostle, Gal. 111. 17. The covenant that was confirm'd before of God in Christ, the Law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot difannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. That which he here calls the covenant, and the promise, is the promise made to Abraham, and to his feed, mention'd ver. 16. i. e. the covenant recorded, Gen. xvII. 7. I will be a God to thee, and to thy feed after thee. Four

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Four hundred and thirty years after this promise and covenant, the law of Moses was inacted. From hence, possibly, some one might take occasion to infer, that the law being later, had fet aside the covenant, as a new act of parliament repeals an old. But this, as the apostle observes, is not the case here. When God had ingaged himself by promise, to Abraham, and to his feed, to be their God, he had put it out of his own power to revoke, or disannul it. No after constitution could render it void. Particularly the law of Mojes could not make the Abrahamic covenant of no effect. That covenant is not fet aside, but is still in force; and by virtue of it, Christians are become the people of God.

To the same purpose the apostle speaks, Rom. IV. 14, 16. If they who are of the law be beirs [of Abraham, and of the promise made to him, and to his feed, ver. 13.] -then the promise is made of none effect. -Therefore it is of faith, that it might he by grace, to the end the promise might be fure to all the feed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, before, or in the fight of God, nalevar! Ges. (For which sense of nalevar!, fee Numb. xxv. 4. Dan. v. 1. 1 Kings, XXI. 13. Pfal. v. 5. XXVI. 3. Lam. 111. 35.) U 4 Here

Here the apostle declares, that the promise made to Abraham, is not made of no effect, or abolished, but is sure to all believers in all ages, and will continue in force to the end of the world.

IX. In case God had not in the gospel, discharged the Gentile converts from the rite of circumcision, they must have circumcifed their male-infants at eight days old. We have shewn, under the two preceding propositions, that the covenant made with Abraham, was designed to extend to all believers, and that it is fill in force. From hence it immediately and obviously follows, that all Christians would have been bound by the rule of circumcifion in that covenant, in case the gospel had not particularly given them a liberty in this re-The apostle (as has been before obferved) declares that the feed of Abraham, mention'd in the covenant, included Gentile believers, in the first, and direct intention of the word feed, Gal. 111.7, 16. And therefore, as St. Paul argues from thence, that the promise belongs to them; the same principle will equally prove, that the condition belongs to them also, viz. That they must circumcise their children on the eighth day, if circumcifion had not been repealed.

Accordingly we find, the Jews all along thus understood the matter, even after they

CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. helieved in Christ. Certain men, who professed Christianity, came from Judea to Antioch, and taught the brethren, and faid, Except ye be circumcifed after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved, Acts, xv. 1. And at Jerusalem, there rose up certain of the feet of the Pharisees, who believed, laying, that it was needful to circumcife the Gentiles, and to command them to keep the law of Moses, ver. 5. These Jews, it is true, were greatly mistaken in suppofing, that the Gentiles were to be circumcifed by virtue of any authority, especially by the authority of Moses: but still it is clear, they did suppose, that Christians were taken into the old church, and that the old feal of the covenant was to be continued. Nay, St. Paul would have thought the same, if the mystery he so often speaks of, had not been revealed to him: which mystery was not barely, that the Gentiles should be received into the church (for fo much the Jews allow'd) but that they should be received without circumcision. See Mr. Locke on Ephel. 1.9. 111.3. But God determined, that the Gentile converts should observe no such thing, Acts, XXI. 21, 25. Though the Abrahamic covenant stood firm, and the Gentile believers were received into it; yet God, upon the coming of Christ, laid aside the old fign of this covenant, and appointed baptime in the room of it.

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One reason why God laid aside the old fign of circumcifion was, because it had been fo throughly incorporated into the Mofaic religion, as to lay men under an obligation to obey the law of Moses, as St. Paul testifies, Gal. v. 2, 3. Behold, I Paul say unto you, If ye be circumcifed, Chirft shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcifed, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. But this is not the only reason why circumcision is laid aside, as appears from hence, that circumcifion was older than the law of Mojes; it was not originally of Moses, but of the fathers, as our Saviour said, John vii. 22. So that the fetting afide of Moses his law, and therewith circumcifion, so far forth as circumcifion was a part of that law, and obliged to the observation of the rest, could not fet aside that obligation to circumcifion, which arose from the covenant made with Abraham, four hundred and thirty years before the law. The reason why circumcifion is wholly fet afide by the gospel, so as not to bind by virtue of the Abrahamic covenant, feems to be, partly, because it was a fign of that whole covenant, of mens having a title to the land of Canaan, as well as of their having the Lord for their God. For the Gentiles are not to inherit Canaan. And therefore if there was to be any sign of the Christian covecovenant, it was fit in the nature of things, that it should be such a one as only signified, that the Lord would be the God of believers, and of their feed, without at all implying, that they should inherit the land of Canaan.

X. The advantage of being circumcifed was very great, as it gave a right to the future resurrection, and to eternal salvation. St. Paul tells us of the Jews in general, who were circumcifed, that this gave them vast advantage above the uncircumcised Gentiles, Rom. 111. 1, 2. What advantage then hath the Jew? or, What profit is there of circumcision? Much every way. This is the apostle's answer; whereas, according to the contemptuous way fome men are unhappily fallen into of treating all positive, though divine institutions, many would have answer'd, that there is no profit of fuch a mere outward ceremony as circumcision; and that, under the former dispensation, a person might have been as well faved without it, as with it. But I choose to follow the apostle, who was of another opinion, and who exprefly fays, that there was every way, or in every respect, much profit of circumcision. First (for the word apaler, does not here fignify chiefly, as our translators have put it, ver. 2. but first, or in the first place) because that unto

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unto them were committed the oracles of God. The apostle mentions this in the first place, as one (though not the chief) instance of the advantage of circumcision. He afterward mentions a greater, Rom. IV. II. where he calls circumcifion a feal of the righteousness of faith, i. e. it was a feal and evidence on God's part, that he accepted Abraham's faith as righteousness, or that he was determin'd to reward his faith with the proper reward of perfect righteousness, even eternal life. text, I own, appears to relate only to the adult, who actually believe. But then, on the other hand, it must be observed, that it makes nothing against the advantage which was derived to infants from circumcifion. The apostle does not so much as hint that circumcifion was of no fervice as to another world, to fuch as were too young to be capable of believing. For though, when men had faith, circumcifion affured them, that that faith should be consider'd and rewarded as righteousness: yet still it might, upon another account, be a token to infants, who were not capable of believing, that though they did not actually believe, yet they should be faved. To them it was, in fact, a token of this, as was before proved, Prop. III.

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Again, St. Paul observes, that one bleffing, which was promised to Abraham in the covenant made with him, was, that he should receive the spirit, Gal. 111. 14. That the bleffing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles, through Fesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit [that is, the fulfilment of this promise, or, the Spirit, who was promised through faith. But the bleffings of that covenant, during the ancient administration, were, as we have feen, confined to them that were circumcifed. So that the receiving of the Spirit, was an advantage that flow'd from circumcision. And all that have the spirit, shall be raised from the dead to eternal life, as it is written, Rom. VIII. II. If the Spirit of him, viz. God, that rais'd up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you; He, viz. God, that raised up Christ from the dead, Shall also quicken your mortal bodies (i. e. shall raise from the dead your bodies which are now mortal, or liable to death, and which shall accordingly be dead) because his spirit dwelleth in you. Thus I choose to read the last clause, as it is in the margin, and the best and oldest versions. When the text is thus read and interpreted, the foundations of Mr. Locke's arguments against this interpretation are utterly subverted. The apostle there goes on to shew, that men's receiving the Spirit was an evidence of

of their future resurrection, ver. 14, 16, 17. As many as are led by the Spirit of God. they are the Jons of God .- The Spirit it self beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the children of God. And if children, then beirs, beirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. As this gift of the Spirit, and consequent title to the inheritance of glory, was part of the bleffing of Abrabam, it must heretofore have belonged to his feed that was, together with him, taken into God's covenant. If this privilege of having the Spirit was granted only to the adult, by virtue of their circumcision (at whatever age they were circumcifed) it yet is evident, it makes nothing against the circumcifion of infants. Nor does it imply, that infants had not a right to the future glory without this indwelling of the Spirit, as well as without actual faith. Still it is certain from what has been before faid, that infants were in this covenant, by virtue of their circumcifion. And it appears, that both the adult, and infants, reap'd vast advantages from their circumcision.

XI. Baptism now (like circumcision of old) makes persons to become the seed of Abraham, and heirs to the promises of the covenant, which God made with him. This is expresly afferted by the apostle, Gal. 111. 27, 29. As many as have been bap-

baptized into Christ, have put on Christ-And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abrabam's feed, and beirs according to the promise; i.e. as it was promised Abraham they should be, ver. 8. fee Acts XIII. 23. The reader will please to take notice of the gradation in these words, viz. (1.) Christians are baptised into Christ, or by baptism are admitted into the church of Christ. (2.) All such have put on Christ; i. e. to use Mr. Locke's words, "They are, as it were, covered all over " with him, as a man is with the clothes "he has put on." (3.) They who have put on Christ, and so are Christ's members, are hereupon become the feed of Abrabam. (4.) And they who thus, through Christ, are become the seed of Abraham, are, by this mean, made beirs of eternal life; according to the promise made to Abraham, that the Almighty would be a God to him, and to his feed. Baptism was appointed in order to mens putting on Christ. Their putting on Christ, or being Christ's, has a view to a farther end, even that they might be the feed of Abraham, and heirs of life, according to the promise made to him, and to his seed, Gen. XVII. 7. Thus it appears, that baptism. now exactly answers the same end, as circumcifion did of old. The design of both was to treat men as the feed of Abraham, and

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and to fignify that they are heirs of falvation, according to the promise made him in the divine covenant. Hence it appears, that both circumcision and baptism are signs and seals of the very same covenant, even the christian covenant made at first with Abraham, and with his seed, and now in Christ declared to extend to the Gentiles.

Parallel to the last cited text is what St. Paul says, Titus, 111. 4, 5, 7. God saves us by the washing of regeneration, and by renewing of the Holy Ghost—that—we might be heirs of eternal life, according to hope; i. e. according to the hope begotten in us by the promise, which God made of being a God to Abraham, and to his seed.

XII. Baptism is now (like circumcision of old) the sign of God's covenant; without which sign ordinarily no one can belong to the covenant and kingdom of God. The New Testament speaks of baptism as the rite whereby persons, who before were not of God's kingdom, are admitted into it; and without which they could not enter. Our Saviour expressly says, John, III. 5. Except any one be born of water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. It has indeed been objected by some, That this text cannot

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CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. 305 not be thought to speak at all of baptism; because (fay they) our Saviour did not institute baptism 'till long after he spoke these words: But this is a great mistake. The institution of baptism recorded, Matt. xxvIII. 19. was not the first institution of it. At that time indeed it was ordered, that baptism should be administered to the Gentiles. 'Till Christ was risen from the dead, he was not made king of the Gentiles; and accordingly during his life, he forbid his disciples to preach to the Gentiles, Matt. x. 5, 6. But when he was risen from the dead, and all authority was given him in beaven and in earth, then he ordered his apostles to go and make disciples among all nations, i.e. all the Gentiles, and to baptize them. Though Christian baptism was not extended to the Gentiles till this time, yet it was instituted long before, and administered to the Jewish converts, as we read John, 111. 22. After these things, i. e. after the conversation which Jesus had with Nicodemus, came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; i. e. they went out of Ferusalem into the country of Judea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized. It is remarkable, that this account simmediately subjoin'd at the end of our Saviour's discourse with Nicodemus, from which the text now under consideration,

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is taken. And in this account it is not faid, that after our Saviour had ended his discourse with Nicodemus, he then first instituted baptism; but that he then pra-Etised it, plainly supposing that it was instituted before. His practice of baptizing the Yews, is again mention'd, ver. 26. The Jews said to John, Rabbi, be (i.e. Christ) who was with thee beyond fordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptiseth, and all men come to him. John, Iv. 1, 2. Jesus made and baptiled more disciples than John; though Jesus himself baptised not with his own hands, but bis disciples did it in his name and stead, We here read of the practice of baptism, but not of its first institution. We are fure Christ practised it immediately after his faying to Nicodemus, Except any one be born of water, &c. And it will not be doubted, I believe, but that it was instituted and practised before. That saying therefore might refer to water-baptism. And I agree with the learned Dr. Gale, that, in fact, it does fo.

The meaning of our Saviour in this discourse with Nicodemus, has not been commonly perceiv'd: and as it tends much to illustrate the subject now under consideration. I beg leave to lay down my thoughts about it. Nicodemus had said to Jesus, We know thou art a teacher come from God. Our Lord

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CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. 307 does not directly reply to this point, but fays, Except any one be born from above, be cannot see the kingdom of God. Which is. I think, as if he had faid, " As you are " a Jew, you think, as all the Jews do, " that the Messiah will preserve the old " legal customs, such as circumcision, &c. " and will confine his regards to the natu-" ral posterity of Abraham, and to such " as become circumcifed, and profelytes "to your whole religion. But herein you " are mistaken. For except any one, tho' " of Abraham's posterity, be born from " above, as well as from Abraham, he can-" not become a member of the Messiah's "kingdom, which is to comprehend all " the spiritual seed of Abraham, and none " else. Ver. 5. Except any one be born [not " of circumcision but] of water [baptism] " and [I do not fay, of Abraham's natu-" ral posterity, according to the flesh, but] " of the spirit [and so be one of Abra-" ham's spiritual seed | he cannot enter into " the king dom of God, which is fet up un-"der the Messiah, and founded on the " Abrahamic covenant." That is to fay, Under the Messiah baptism succeeds in the 100m of circumcifion, and the Spiritual feed of Abraham succeeds in the room of his children, according to the flesh. That our Saviour here refers to the fleshly and firitual seed of Abraham appears from the X 2 next

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next words, ver. 6. That [feed of Abraham] which is born of the flesh, is [his] flesh [ly seed, which is not by this privilege alone intitled to the bleffings of the Abrahamic covenant, distributed in the Messiah's kingdom.] And that [seed of Abraham which is born of the Spirit, is [his] /pirit [ual feed; who, though not his posterity, nor circumcised, are yet to inherit the bleffings of the Abrahamic covenant in the kingdom of the Messiah.] Upon this scheme, the eighth verse is very intelligible, The wind bloweth where it lifteth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit: which may be paraphrased thus; " As the wind cometh not only from the " borders of Judea, but also from un-" known, distant countries: so the spiri-" tual feed of Abraham (who are made " his feed, not by birth, but by the Spirit " promised in the covenant, Gal. 111. 14.) " shall come not only from Judea, but " also from all countries, into Christ's " kingdom. And as the wind blows where " it will; so God will breathe out his " Spirit on whom he will, and thereby " constitute them of the seed of Abraham. " For all that have the Spirit, and that " believe, ver. 15, 16. shall not perish, but " shall have that eternal life, which was

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CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. 309

" promised to Abraham, and to his seed,
" in these words; I will be their God."

If this interpretation of our Saviour's discourse be allow'd to be just, it will be also granted, that he speaks of baptism (in the same manner as Abraham spoke of circumcision) as the sign of God's covenant, without which, ordinarily, a person could not be intitled to eternal life.

To the same purpose our Saviour says, Mark, XVI. 16. He that believes [the gofpel, ver. 15.] and is baptised, shall be saved. Baptilm then is a mean of falvation, as well as faith. St. Peter, in like manner, says, I Pet. III. 21. Baptism now saveth us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by, or through the resurrection of Fefus Christ. Though washing away the filth of the flesh with the water of baptism, will not alone save us; yet baptism taken intire, with the Spirit producing the answer of a good conscience, doth now save us. Exactly parallel to this, is what St. Paul fays, Titus, 111. 4, &c. God our Saviour saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghostthat --- we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life; or rather, as the last words should be placed, Heirs of eternal life, according to hope, as was hinted before. Agreeably hereto, the scripture

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fays, that baptism is for the remission of sins, Acts, 11. 38. Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins. Chap. XXII. 16. Arise, and be baptifed, and wash away thy fins. Farther to confirm this, we may observe, that men were not in the church, nor reckon'd members of it, till they were baptised. Acts, 11. 41, 42. Then they that gladly received Peter's word were baptifed: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. They were not look'd upon as added to the church, till they were baptised. And as soon as they were enter'd by baptism, they had communion with the church in breaking of bread, and in prayers. St. Paul speaks of men's being baptised into Jesus Christ, Rom. v1 3. which fignifies, that baptism is a mean of men's being enter'd into his church, and of being interested in his mediation. From all these considerations it appears, that ordinarily persons cannot belong to the kingdom, or be interested in the covenant of God without bapti/m; I fay, ordinarily, because it is reasonable to suppose, that a merciful God will make allowance for some extraordinary cases. Of this kind, we may suppose, is the case of

of fuch truly pious men as, after all the serious and impartial inquiry they can make, are still persuaded, that Christ has notrequired water-baptism at all, or, that he never intended it should be continued in his church. As these sincere Christians do not stick at obeying any command of Christ, which they can discover to be his, and would immediately conform to that of baptism, if they thought it to be bis: it cannot be doubted, but that they are interested in God's covenant and mercy. But except the extraordinary cases, it seems plain, that if a man believes water-baptism to be an ordinance of Christ, and yet will not submit to it, he is not sincere, and so cannot be look'd upon as in covenant with God, or a member of the church of Christ.

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XIII. A profession of the Christian faith is the term of the church's admitting the adult to baptism: and fincere faith is necessary to their having a real right to it. Till fuch profes'd their faith, they were not baptised; but immediately upon their declaring their faith in Christ, they were baptised. When the Samaritans believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptised, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also, X 4

and -- was baptised, Acts, VIII. 12, 13. As Philip and the eunuch went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch faid, See, here is water; What Should binder my being baptised? And Philip faid, If you believe with all your heart, you may. He answer'd and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God .-And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptised bim, ver. 36, 37, 38. Thus Lydia, and the jayler at Philippi, were baptised upon their believing, Acts, xv1. 14, 15, 31, 33. The Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptised, Acts, xvIII. 8. When Paul was convinced, and believed in Jesus, Ananias faid to him, Now, why do you delay? Arise, and be baptised, Acts XXII. 16.

This practice of the church was exactly agreeable to the institution of baptism, Mark, xvi. 15, 16. where Christ said to his apostles, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth the gospel which ye preach, and is baptised, shall be saved. This explains St. Matthew's account of the same institution, Matth. xxviii. 19. Go and teach, or rather, make disciples among all nations, baptising them. Before their baptism, they were to be taught so much as was necessary to make them disciples, viz. That fesus Christ is the Son of God, as the eunuch expres-

expressed it. It is not necessary, that a man should have a perfect understanding of the whole scheme of Christianity, before he be baptised. He is sufficiently qualified for baptism, if he does believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. For, as furely as he believes this, fo furely does he devote himself to learn of Christ, whatfoever he shall teach him. When a man thus believes, and thus takes Christ for his Teacher and Lord, he should be immediately baptised. And when he is baptised, then he is distinctly and particularly to be taught whatfoever Christ has commanded his apostles to teach the church, both as to faith and practice.

It would be iniquity in me to finish this head, without taking the occasion here given me, of bearing my testimony against making men's assent to merely human articles, the term or condition of baptism. This has been the cause of innumerable divisions and sactions in the church of God; and will be therefore always avoided by such as have at heart the honour of Christianity,

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XIV. The texts which speak of faith as the term of baptism, do not at all imply that infants are not to be baptised. In the case last mentioned, there is a parallel between baptism and circumcision. If a Hea-

314 The SCRIPTURE-DOCTRINE of Heathen heretofore was profelyted to the Jewish religion, and did hereupon defire to be circumcifed, he was admitted to circumcifion upon the account of his faith in the God of Israel. And till he professed this faith, he could not lawfully be circumcifed. And if a Jewish prophet had been persuading and inviting a set of Heathens to judaism and circumcision, he would have been forced to talk in such a manner as this, viz. " Believe in the one true God, " and ye shall be circumcised. He that " believeth, and is circumcifed, shall be " faved: but he that believeth not, shall be " condemn'd. Repent of your idolatry, " and other fins, and be circumcifed. Cir-" cumcifion now faveth us, not the put-" ting away of a bit of flesh, but the an-" fwer of a good conscience toward the " true God. Arise then, and be circum-" cised, and put away your fins." In this manner the Fewish prophet must have spoke to his Heathen audience. And if he had succeeded, and made proselytes, the bistory of it must have been expressed in fuch language as this, viz. " When the " Heathens believed the prophet preach-" ing the things concerning the kingdom " of God, they were circumcifed. A cer-" tain convert said to the Jewish prophet, "What should hinder my being circum-" cised? The prophet answer'd, If you " be-

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CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. " believe with all your heart, you may. "He replied, I believe that there is one "God, and that Moses is his prophet. "And hereupon he circumcifed him. " Others hearing, believed, and were cir-" cumcifed." This, I fay, must have been the language, in case a prophet had preach'd to a Heathen nation, and profe-" lyted them. And yet, I suppose, no one would from this kind of language infer, that infants were not to be circumcifed, or that actual faith in God was fo univerfally necessary to circumcifion, as that infants were not to receive it, for want of actual faith. As this will be allow'd by every one, it must be acknowledged also, by parity of reason, that the very same expressions, when in the same circumstances applied to baptism, cannot imply that infants are not to be baptifed for want of actual faith. I do not fay, that these expressions prove that infants may be baptised: all I now contend for is, that they do not even feem to imply, that infants are not to be baptised: for this they cannot do, unless in the case above put, they did also imply, that infants were not heretofore to be circumcifed. As it will be allow'd, they would not have implied this, they cannot confishently be thought to imply the other.

If it had been fit to have continued circumcifion as the fign of God's covenant, and Christ had actually continued it, when he gave his apostles a commission to proselyte the Gentile nations, I do not see how he could have expressed his thoughts better than thus; Go, disciple all nations, circumcifing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoft, i. e. Prove to the Gentiles that Jesus is the Christ; and when they profess to believe this, circumcife them. Would the apoftles, or any one else, have infer'd from hence, that infants, having not actual faith, were not to be circumcifed? Nay, rather, on the other hand, the apostles would have reason'd thus: " The fign of "God's covenant, circumcifion, has hi-" therto been confined to one nation, even " that of the Israelites, But now Christ " has commanded us to extend it to all the " nations of the earth. He has order'd us " to go and discipline all nations, and cir-" cumcife them. Surely, it is his inten-" tion that we should take our pattern s from the practice of circumcifion among " the 7ews. He cannot therefore be sup-" posed to mean, that we must only cir-" cumcife grown men, who are capable of so believing the gospel, and profess to do " fo. It is evident he intends, that when we shall have circumcifed such, we " should

CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. 317 " should next circumcise their " children und flaves; and that in after " generations, the males among them " should be circumcifed the eighth day. "Thus it was at the first institution. " Abraham was first circumcised; then " his childen and flaves, of whatever ages " they happen'd to be: and in after-gene-" rations, their children were circumcifed " on the eighth day. This is a direction to " us. And when we are bid to Go, disci-" ple all nations, circumcifing them, we " plainly see, we are not forbidden to cir-" cumcife infants, but, on the contrary, " are order'd to imitate this example of " our father Abraham." I say, if circumcifion had been retain'd as the feal of the covenant, and the same commission had been given to the apostles as now was given them, only the word circumcife, used instead of baptise, no one, I suppose, would have imagin'd that form of expreffion would, in the least, have interfered with the circumcision of infants. It is as certain then, that the same form of words, applied to baptism, cannot, in the least, interfere with the baptism of infants.

These considerations, I think, fully take off the force of all the objections that men think they find in the scripture, against the baptism of infants. If there be any thing in the nature of baptism, as a seal of the

covenant, which confines it to such as believe; there must have been the same limiting nature in circumcision, which was a seal of the same covenant. But, as this is certainly false, the other cannot be true. If an infant was not, by reason of his age, unqualified to receive the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of saith, an infant cannot now, by reason of his age, be consistently thought unqualified for

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baptism, which is a seal of the same.

Farther to confirm this point, if it needs confirmation, it may be observed, that the same forms of expression which are urged out of the New Testament, to prove that infants are not qualified for baptism, for want of actual faith and repentance, would equally prove them unqualified for falvation. From Christ's saying, He that believes and and is baptised, Shall be saved, some have infer'd, that a person must actually believe, or else he cannot be bap-With as much strength of reason tised. they might infer, that a person cannot be faved, unless he actually believe; especially fince it is added, He that believeth not, shall be damn'd. Yet it is certain, and acknowledg'd, that though infants do not believe, yet they shall not be damn'd; yea, many of them shall be faved. It is evident then to all, that this text must be interpreted as speaking only of the adult, who who were capable of hearing and believing the gospel. Since then it does not at all speak of infants, they may be saved, and may be baptised too, notwithstanding that they are not believers. The method of proving that they may be saved without faith, will as necessarily demonstrate, that they may be baptised without their own faith, notwithstaning any thing that is laid down in this text. Thus all the objections against infant-baptism are cut off at once.

XV. Both males and females are to partake of baptism. Thus we read, the Samaritans were baptised, both men and women, Acts, VIII. 12. Lydia was baptised, Acts, XVI. 14, 15. To the same purpose the apostle says; As many of you as have been baptised into Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew, nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor semale: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus, Gal. III. 27, 28. i. e. both male and semale, are equally admitted to baptism.

Herein there is a difference between baptism and circumcision. Baptism is common to both sexes: whereas circumcision was confined to the males. The reason of this is not easy to be discover'd by us, though it is perfectly known to the all-wise God, who instituted circumcision.

Under

Under the old dispensation, the females had no mark or feal of the covenant appointed for them instead of circumcision, Yet from hence it was not to be infer'd, that they were not in covenant with God. Those who deny infant-baptism will say, that infants have no mark or feal of the covenant appointed for them: and yet they as heartily maintain that infants, at least, some of them, are in covenant with God, have an interest in him as their God. and consequently a title to eternal salva-They may then as eafily, and upon the same principles, allow, that females of old might be interested in the promises of God's covenant, though the seal of it was not applied to them. The confining circumcifion to the males cannot be thought to imply that circumcifion had no relation to the covenant of grace, and was not a feal of it. For it is certain fact, that the covenant made with Abraham, Genefis, xvII. 7. was the covenant of grace, containing the promises of pardon, and of eternal life, as was before proved, Prop. I. And it is as certain fact, that circumcition was a fign of that covenant, and a feal of the righteousness of faith: so that its being confined to the males, cannot possibly imply the contrary.

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XVI. Baptism is instituted in the room. of circumcifion. We have already feen, that both these ordinances were figns of the very fame covenant; and that the use of both is to admit persons into the covenant made with Abraham, and with his feed, Prop. XI. Answerably, it is to be observed, that when baptism was instituted for the Gentiles, circumcision ceas'd to be the fign of the covenant: which is, in other words, the same as saying, that baptism comes in the room of circumcision. The same may be infer'd from the apostle's calling baptism by the name of circumcision, Coloff. 11. 11, 12. Ye are circumcifed with the circumcifion made without hands, in putting off the body of the fins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ; buried with bim in baptifm. He here calls baptism, the circumcision of Christ, to distinguish it from the circumcision of Moses, and of Abraham. This was the Mosaic, or Abrahamic circumcision; but baptism is the Christian circumcition, i. e. in plain English, it comes in the room of circumcision, and answers the end of it, as a feal of the covenant. swerably, the apostle calls Christians, the circumcision, or the persons who had received the true circumcision, viz. baptism, which succeeded in its room. Phil. 111. 3.

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XVII. God now, under the gospel, takes some infants into covenant with him, and is their God, and so will give them eternal life. This will very plainly appear from Mark, x. 14. where our Lord says, Suffer the little children (so little as that he took them up in his arms, ver. 16.) to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. That is to say, The kingdom of God belongs to, or comprehends such infants as these: or, if any one would have the words so stifly render'd, Such's is the kingdom of God, like, Their's is the kingdom

of heaven, Matt. v. 3.

Some, to evade the force of this text, would suppose, that by the word such, Christ here means (not such infants as those he had in his arms, but) fuch grown persons as were like those infants in simplicity and innocence. But according to this interpretation, they will never be able to make out the force of our Saviour's argu-They represent our Saviour as saying, The kingdom of God is their's, who are harmless like infants; therefore suffer the infants to come to me. According to these men, our Saviour would have said the fame thing, if men had brought him lambs or doves, " Suffer the doves to come " to me; for of fuch is the kingdom of "God, i. e. Suffer the doves to come to ec me:

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CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. 323 " me: for, though the kingdom of God " is not their's; yet it belongs to fuch as " are barmless as doves." But it cannot be thought, our divine Saviour would talk and argue at this rate. It is plain then, he intended to fay, that fuch infants as those in his arms belong'd to the kingdom of God. And thus our Saviour's argument appears to be very strong and conclusive, viz. " Since such infants as these have " the kingdom of God for their's, and fo " have him for their God, let them be " brought to me: it is fit I should take " notice of them, and give them my blef-" fing, as members of my Father's king-" dom."

It is next to be confider'd, whether Christ here speaks of all infants, or only of some. The learned Dr. Gale agrees for far with us, as to own, that Christ spoke of infants. But then he carries the matter farther, and supposes that Christ meant all infants what soever, that all of them belong to God's kingdom, and shall assuredly be saved. Reflections, p. 421. I heartily agree with the doctor, in abhorring that monstrous and impious doctrine, that there are children in hell of a span long. It is as plain as any point of natural religion, that those children, who die before they come to be moral agents, shall not suffer the least degree of torment in a future state,

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state. And, on the other hand, it is as plain to me, that fince they never came to be moral agents, none of the divine perfections oblige God to treat them as moral agents, until he has promised so to do. But he might, in perfect confistence with his holiness, justice, and goodness, treat them as he does other animals that are not moral agents, i. e. either annihilate them at death, or cast them into a state of eternal fleet. That he will not thus deal with all infants, I am now fetting my felf to prove. The text now under confideration, fully establishes the point. But I cannot think it comprehends all infants. The meaning seems to be, of fuch kind of infants as these is the kingdom of God, i. e. of such infants as have been partakers of the feat of the covenant, of fuch infants as have been baptised, or, at least, circumcised like these. Dr. Gale positively says, They were unbaptised infants: but he offers no proof. Sure I am, it is possible, they might have been baptised, since it is certain fact, that our Lord had practifed baptism among the Yews, almost four years before this, John, 111. 22. So that if he practised infant-baptism, these infants that were brought to him, might have been fuch as were baptifed by his disciples: and then it would have been very natural for him to have faid, " Of such baptised infants as these is ce the

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CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. 325 " the kingdom of God: fuffer them there-" fore to come to me." But be this as it will, there can be no doubt but that these infants, if males, had been circumcifed: and then our Saviour's meaning may most naturally be supposed to have been, " Such circumcifed infants as these, have " the Almighty for their God, are heirs " of his future kingdom, and members of " his church; and therefore do not hin-" der me from receiving and bleffing " them." After all, thus much is certain, that some infants, now under the gospel, belong to God's kingdom, and have bim for their God. And this will be sufficient to my present purpose.

Another text, wherein the Almighty is declared to be the God of some infants, is, I Cor. VII. 14. Now are your children holy, that is, they belong to God, they are bis, he is their God, according to the meaning of that expression in the Abrahamic covenant, as before explain'd, Prop. I. Agreeably to this, the learned Dr. Gale contends, that the word boly, in scripture, fignifies To consecrate, to ballow, p. 514. In this sense the whole passage is most naturally to be interpreted. The apostle says, ver. 13. that a married Christian, who had an unbelieving partner, might lawfully cohabit with the unbeliever. The reason of this determination is given, ver. 14. For the unbe-

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unbelieving husband is consecrated, or hallow'd by the believing wife; and the unbelieving wife is consecrated or hallow'd by the believing busband : else were your children unhallow'd; but now are they hallow'd, or consecrated to God. was this: A Christian had a wife, who was not converted to the faith of Christ, and who, consequently, was not related or devoted to God, as one of his people. The husband therefore question'd, whether he ought not to depart from such a wife. The reason of his doubt was this: He confider'd himself as one that had been consecrated to God, to be his servant, in opposition to the world, and to all idols: he confider'd his unbelieving wife as one that was so far from being consecrated to God, that she was rather devoted and related to the world, and to idols: upon this he fear'd (if he should still live with her, and continue related to her) left he should thereby act inconfistently with the relation he bore to God, and quite destroy it. remove this doubt, the apostle most reafonably observes, that the unbelieving wife is consecrated, or related to God by means of her bushand, provided the conjents, and is willing to dwell as a wife with the believer: which proviso is expresly mention'd by the apostle, and must not be here forgotten. The meaning of which is this: chough

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CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. though the unbelieving wife be not her felf immediately related or confecrated to God; yet, as she is willing to dwell with her husband, she is related to one who is immediately related to God: and thus, in a fense, she is related to God, mediately, and through her busband. By her voluntary choosing to dwell with her Christian husband, she, as it were, consecrates her felf to the use of God's servant; while he confecrates himself, and all that is his, to God. So that in serving him, she really, though she does not intend it, serves God. And her relation to God's relative. is a mediate relation to God.

The apostle next sets himself to prove, That the unbelieving wife is confecrated and related to God, by means of her voluntary consent to dwell with the Christian in the relation of a wife; and he proves it thus, viz. by faying, Else were your children unclean, but now are they boly: That is, if the unbelieving wife were not to be confidered as hallowed, confecrated, or related to God, by means of her being related to a tervant of God; then would their children not be confecrated, or related to God. By their marriage, either the unbelieving wife must become related to God, or else the Christian husband must lose his relation to God, by being related to the unbeliever. But the Y 4 lat-

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latter cannot be supposed; since it was not the Christian's fault that his wife con-When he married tinued an unbeliever. her first, he was himself an unbeliever: Upon his being converted, he was interested in God's covenant; and her continuing an Infidel cannot destroy that interest. As then the Christian husband is related and consecrated to God, she, by consecrating her self to his use, must be considered as confecrated and related to God through him. And then the children that proceed from this marriage must be holy, i. e. hallowed, related, and confecrated to God. The Apostle takes it for a certain and acknowledged truth, that the children of Christians are holy, or belong to God as his. From which principle he argues, that the unbelieving wife is fanctified, or confecrated to God through her believing husband. The children then are God's, because both the parents are his, the father immediately, and the mother by means of her voluntary relation to the father. This must be the case of the mother, or else the children could not be holy, or be reckon'd to belong to God. For if the unbeliever be not consecrated by means of the believer; then the believer must be unconsecrated by means of the unbeliever; and then the children of two such unconsecrated perfons would be unclean, or unconfectated. But But the children of a believer are holy, or related to God; therefore so must the unbelieving mother also be, by means of her husband. This appears to me to be the apostle's meaning, and manner of arguing in this place. If so, this confirms what is otherwise also proved under this head, that some infants under the gospel, are part of God's people, boly to the Lord, and in covenant with him; and that he is their God, and so will give them eternal life.

XVIII. Some infants must be baptised. It appears from what has been already said, that some infants belong to God, and are part of his church or kingdom. It must now be added, that bapti/m is common to all such, as the apostle saith, I Cor. XII. 13. We all are baptifed into one body, i. e. all we that belong to the church or body of Christ, were admitted into it by means of baptism. As infants then were some of that body, they were some of those all who were by baptifm admitted into it, or made members of it. The word all, in this text, must comprehend infants, for the same reason as it does, Chap. x. 2. All were baptised into Moles in the cloud, and in the sea.

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Besides, the covenant made with Abraham, and with his feed, Gen. xvII. 7. included infants. This covenant is not vacated or disannulled (Prop. VIII.) It was

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originally intended for Christians and their feed (Prop. VII.) It is confirmed by God to Christ (ess Xersov, Gal. 111. 17.) i. e. it was made with Christ, consider'd as including all his members in him. As circumcifion of old was the fign of admitting persons into this covenant; so now baptism is the sign of admitting persons into the same individual covenant (Prop. XI.) therefore it must be administer'd to the same persons, i. e. to infants as well as to the adult. When the covenant is the same, the privileges and promises the same, the feal must have been the same, if it had not been expresly changed (Prop. IX.) and the feed of Abraham to inherit must be the fame also, unless there is any alteration made by the gospel. The feed in that covenant included infants; and therefore infants are still part of that feed of Abraham. The feed of Abraham had a right to the feal of the covenant; their right still continues as the covenant does; and therefore they must be admitted, infants in particular, to baptism, the present seal of this covenant.

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If God thought fit to make any changes, or alterations in any circumstance of this covenant, it was necessary, that he should give notice of it in the gospel. Accordingly, as he thought fit to change the old sign of circumcision for a new one of baptism,

tism, so he has, in the gospel, expresly warned us of the change, Prop. IX. And as he chose to make one alteration with regard to the persons to whom the seal of the faid covenant should be applied, and to ordain that females, as well as males, should be baptifed (Prop. XV.) so he has expresly told us of this alteration in the gospel. In like manner it must be concluded, that if God would have had a farther alteration made, if infants that were formerly to partake of the feal of this covenant were, upon the coming of Christ, to partake of it no more; undoubtedly God would have given us express warning of it, and have told us in the gofpel, that though infants heretofore were in the covenant, now they are to be shut out of it. But as the gospel says no fuch thing, it is certain it cannot be true. It is then really incumbent upon those Christians, who oppose infant-baptism, if they would make their point good, positively to prove, that the gospel has cast infants out of the Abrahamic covenant, tho' once they were in it. How will they prove they must not circumcise their children? It cannot be proved by faying, the Abrahamic covenant does not include them: for we have seen that, in fact, it does include them, Prop. VII. They can only prove it by those express texts of the New Telta-

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Testament, which declare that circumcifion is set aside. In like manner, how will they shew that baptism, the present seal of the Abrahamic covenant, does not belong to infants? It cannot be proved by faying that infants do not belong to that covenant, for, in fact, they do: (Prop. VII.) nor can it be proved by faying, that baptism is not a seal of that covenant, for, in fact, it is: (Prop. XI.) but if it could be proved at all, it must be proved by texts, which expresly declare, that infants are now cast out of covenant, and have no longer a title to the feal of it. But no fuch texts can be produced: and therefore it is certain, they continue in covenant, and have still a right to the feal of it, which is baptism.

It will be in vain here to urge, that the scripture sufficiently declares against applying this seal of the covenant to infants, by making faith and repentance the conditions of baptism. For this kind of arguing would as well prove, that infants heretofore were not qualified for circumcision, which yet no man will affert. As this argument would prove too much, it must be look'd upon as proving nothing. It has, I judge, been sufficiently consider'd already

under Prop. XIV.

No one can be Christ's ordinarily, till he is baptised; nor can he, till then, be reckon'd

CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. 333 kon'd to be of Abraham's feed, Prop. XII. So that if infants of Christians are not to be baptised, the hard consequence will be, that the infants of one that turn'd from Judaism, to Christianity, were in a worse flate than they would have been in, if their father had not been converted. Let us suppose, for the purpose, that Apollos had two fons, James and Peter. Suppose that fames was born while his father was a Few, and so was circumcised; and that Peter was born after his father was become a Christian, and so was not circumcifed. If Peter was not to be baptifed neither, then he was in a case unspeakably worse than that of his brother. James, who was circumcifed while the law of circumcifion was in force, was thereby admitted into covenant with God, as his God. (Prop. III.) But, according to the notion I am now opposing, his brother Peter had no fign of the covenant applied to him: the consequence of which is, that Peter was not in covenant with God, nor intitled to a resurrection. (Prop. XII.) If Apollos had still continued a Jew, and

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had circumcifed his younger fon Peter, he would have been in covenant with God, as well as his elder brother. But now Peter missed all this happiness, according to the principles I am opposing, only because his father Apollos did his duty, that is, turned

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Christian: which seems to be a very odd supposition. How could Apollos his doing bis duty forfeit his fon's right, which he would otherwise have had? Surely Christianity was never design'd to lessen and abridge the privileges of good men and their children. Their infants under the Tewish dispensation, were in covenant with God. Could then their faith in the gospel cast their children out of covenant? The Jews were cut off from God's church and covenant, because of their unbelief: and others were taken into God's covenant and church, because of their faith, Rom. x1. 17—20. Their faith therefore could never have such and influence upon their infants, as to shut them out of covenant. As all believers now are under the same covenant with Abraham, they must be intitled to the same privileges with regard to their posterity, as Abraham was with regard to his. Nor let it be pretended, that Abraham's faith, on which his title was founded, was peculiar and extraordinary, and so intitled him to peculiar privileges. For, besides that the apostle makes no fuch supposition, it must be said, that if Abraham's faith was great, when he believed, God could raise Isaac from the dead; Christians faith is as great when they believe that God can, and will raise all the dead, and that he has actually raised our

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our Saviour, and many faints with him, Matt. xxvII. 52, 53. If Abraham believed that God could make a woman past age bear a son; Christians believe that God has made a virgin conceive and bring forth a son. Abraham believed a revelation made from heaven, immediately to himself: Christians now believe, upon the credit of a revelatiion made to others, almost seventeen hundred years ago. And this faith is, at least, equally peculiar and extraordinary. See John, xx. 29. So that Christians in the same covenant, must be intitled to all the same privileges with Abraham: consequently, as the covenant gave his infants a right to the feal of the covenant; the same covenant must give to the children of Christians a right to the feal of the fame covenant. They must then have been circumcifed, if circumcifion had not been abolish'd. And now circumcision is exchanged for baptism, they must be baptised.

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Dr. Gale rightly says, that Christ has declared of infants in particular, that of such is the kingdom of God, Mark, x. 14. and that except any one be born of water, and of the Spirit, i. e. except he be baptised, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. From these two texts put together, it plainly ap-

² Reflections, p. 421. Sermons, Vol. II. p. 179.

pears,

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pears, that some infants are in the kingdom of God, and that, since none could enter into it without baptism, they were

baptised.

The contrary supposition will lead men into strange affertions, as will appear from putting the following Case. Caius is a virtuous young man, of fifteen years of His parents were good Christians. and baptised in their adult age. Caius is not yet baptised: you exhort him to receive baptism: he asks you; " To what " end would you have me baptised? Do " not you say, The end of baptism is, that " persons may thereby enter into the king-" dom of God, and that, unless I am bap-" tised, I cannot enter into it? And yet, " do not you acknowledge that I am al-" ready in the kingdom of God, and have " been so ever fince I was born? How " then is it possible for me now to enter " into it? These two things are utterly " inconfistent: and you must give up one " or the other of them. While you retain " these two inconsistent propositions, you " represent our Saviour as saying, Except " a man (though he has been in the king-" dom of God for several years already, " and is in it still) be born of water, and of " the Spirit, he cannot enter into the king-" dom of God. If I am (as you acknow-" ledge) already in the kingdom of God, " why.

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" why do you urge me to be baptifed? "You must renounce one of your princi-" ples. Either you must contradict our "Saviour, and fay, that a person may " enter into the kingdom of God with-" out being born of water; or else you " must say, that those infants who are " in the kingdom of God, enter'd into it. " by means of baptism. If you will stand " to this latter, and acknowledge infant-" baptism, then you may consistently ex-" hort me to be baptised, that I may enter " into the kingdom of God, to which I " perceive I do not yet belong. It is ne-" ceffary then in order to your being con-" fistent with your self, that you acknow-

" ledge infant-baptism.'

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The consequence from church-memberhip to baptism, is in it self so clear, that those Christians who are against infantbaptism, have generally, if not always, allow'd it. In consequence of this, Mr. Tombs, and many others, who denied infants right to baptism, did, with persect consistency maintain, that infants, are not members of Christ's body, or parts of his kingdom. But this is a point which, I imagine, will not now be defended by any. Dr. Gale expresly owns, that infants are in the kingdom of God. If then the confequence from infant-church-membership, 10 infant-baptism, be good, then Dr. Gale

338 The SCRIPTURE-DOCTRINE of Gale ought to have maintained infant.

bapti/m too.

From what has been faid it appears, that if any one will deny infant-baptism, he must make it appear, that no consequence can be drawn from infant-church-membership to infant-baptism; or, that infants never were part of God's church; or, that if they once were, they are now excluded: they must prove, either that Abraham's covenant was never intended to include Christians; or, that this covenant is abolished by the gospel: they must prove this covenant never included infants; or, that now under the gospel, infants are cast out of it. Unless such things as these can be proved, the doctrine of infantbaptism will stand firm and unshaken.

The custom of baptizing infants is abundantly confirm'd from the practice of the ancient churches of Christ. I never appeal to the fathers as judges, to determine what is a point of faith or duty. Yet, I suppose, those who talk of them with the greatest contempt (though they have never read them) will allow me to fay, that they are as capable of being witnesses to a fast, which fell under their notice, as Herodotus or Livy, and deferve as much belief. As historians, I refer to them, and no otherwise. Now it is certain fact, as many of the primitive Christians have te-

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CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. stified, and those who deny infant-baptism acknowledge, that the baptism of infants is as ancient as the second century. truly learned Dr. Gale, who had carefully examined into this matter, fays (in his fermons, Vol. II. p. 208.) that " in the " second century, some began to think of " baptifing their infants: and, in the end " of the third century, this practice pre-" vail'd pretty much in the west, and, in " after ages, spread, indeed, almost over "the whole Christian church." At the ame time, it must be observed, the doctor does not attempt to name any one instance in those first ages, of a person born of, or belonging to Christians, whose baptism was defer'd, till he came to be of age sufficient to be deem'd a moral agent: and yet he as good as owns, that we have a right to demand such an instance. For, what he well fays against those, who deny the perpetuity of baptism, p. 238. may be as well applied to fuch as deny the divine inflitution of infant-baptism. I shall transcribe the doctor's words, and apply them to this case, that the reader may see, whether they do not fuit it, as exactly as the other. "Why should we not require from "our adversaries, who deny the perpe-"tuity of baptism [and the baptism of "infants] instances to shew, that the de-"scendants of Christians seven while in-" fants

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"fants] were not baptised; as well as they "require instances of us to shew that they "were? — It is reasonable to observe, "that the oldest accounts we have of the descendants of Christians [even while "infants] are intirely on our side, and do "shew that they were baptised: and "therefore, though there are, perhaps, "no instances ancienter than the third or fourth century [of the baptism of the descendants of Christians; and no instances antienter than the second century of the baptism of infants:] "yet seeing the oldest, and, indeed, "all are on our side, and not against than the second of the second of the second of the second of the oldest, and not against than the second of the second of the oldest, and not against the second of the oldest, and not against the second of the second of

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" us; the far most probable conclusion " from this head of instances, is certainly " in our favour, that baptism was admi-" nister'd even to the descendants of Chri-" stian parents [in their infancy] there be-" ing no intimation, nor any kind of in-" stances to be produced on the contrary, " and to shew that baptism was not ad-" minister'd to fuch." If this argument of Dr. Gale be good and conclusive at all, with respect to either of the two cases, it is equally conclusive with respect to the other. So that if any will stand to his argument in relation to the perpetuity of baptism, they must, if they will be confistent with themselves, stand to it in relato infant-baptism, and acknowledge, that fince

fince we have certain instances of infant-baptism, as old as the second century, and not one instance of delaying the baptism of the children of Christians, till their adult age, for many centuries afterward; the most probable conclusion is, that the children of Christians were, from the beginning, baptised in their infancy.

It is not sufficient, though it is very material, to have the confession of Dr. Gale, with regard to the antiquity of infant-baptism. It is necessary to add two or three of the most material testimonies of

the ancients, relating to this matter.

About one hundred and fifty years after the death of St. John the apostle, there was an affembly of fixty fix bishops, who spoke of infant-baptism, as a known, establish'd, ancient, and uncontested practice. One Fidus had moved a doubt, whether infants should be baptifed (as they were formerly not circumcifed) till the eighth day; or whether they might not lawfully be baptised on the seventh, the sexth, or any other day after their birth? To this quefion the whole body answer'd, that infants might lawfully be baptised, either the feventh, the fixth, or any other day after they were born. From this piece of history it appears, that both the person who moved the doubt above specified, and all the persons who resolved it, unanimously Z_3 agreed

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agreed in this, that infants were to be baptifed; and that it was the fettled custom of the church to baptise them. If the asfembly had been against infant-baptism, they would have answer'd, "It is so far from " being necessary to baptise children on the " eighth day after their birth, that they " ought not to be baptifed at all, till they " are of age to judge and act for them-" selves. But none of those bishops was in this fentiment. They all look'd upon it, and talk'd of it as a thing uncontested, that infants were to be baptifed. I do not urge their judgment as any thing: I only consider them as bistorians, acquainting us with the custom of the church in their days a. From this fact we may argue thus, viz. It is natural enough to suppose, that at this time fome of the fixty fix bishops, or pastors, were fifty or threescore years And as they made no question about infant-baptism, it cannot be thought that it was introduced as a novelty, or even difputed in their time. This carries the practice up to one hundred years after St. John's death. And it is most likely that the fathers of these bishops had no apprehension that it was a human institution, but received it as a practice derived from the apostles. And such it must certainly

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² See Cyprian's works, Epist. ad Fidum.

have been, according to the reasoning of the learned Dr. Gale, just now quoted.

It is farther worth noting, that Austin, about one hundred and fifty years after this determination of Cyprian, and his brethren, at large cites the passage now refer'd to, and adds, that he never heard or read of any Christians, or even of any Hereticks, or Schismaticks, that pretended to be guided by the scripture, who denied that infants were baptifed upon the account of orignal fin b. And Pelagius, his adversary, said, That he never heard even any impious Heretic deny baptism to infants . Yet, 'tis certain, that Pelagius himself was under strong temptations to deny infant-baptism, upon the account of his other doctrines, if it had been any way possible to have done so. For he at once maintained, that infants were baptifed for the remission of sins, and yet that they bad no fin d.

All these things put together, seem to afford evidence sufficient to prove, that infant-baptism was practised in the church from the beginning, and consequently that it is of an apostolical and divine original.

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b De peccatorum meritis, &c. Lib. iii. c. 5, 6. Tom. VII. p. 890, &c. Lugd. 1562.

Apud Augustin. de gratia Christi, et peccato originali, Lib. ii. c. 17, 18. Tom. VII. Part. posterior. p. 86, 87.

XIX. Those infants who have a right to baptism, are the posterity, the adopted children, and the flaves of Christians; that is, in one word, the property of Christians. It was before proved, Prop. VI. that the reason why certain particular infants (and no others) were to be circumcifed, was because they belonged, as a property, to one who was in covenant with God, and who, if a male, was circum-From hence we may learn a rule to go by, in administring baptism to infants. Since the covenant was the fame then as it is now, and always extended to infants, it is most natural to suppose, that it must now be extended to all the same infants as formerly. God has, in the New Testament, expresly warn'd us of the alterations he thought fit to make, with respect to the feal of the covenant, and the persons to whom the seal is to be applied. He has expresly told us, he has appointed baptism in the room of circumcision, and ordained that females, as well as males, shall be baptifed. If then he had made any other alterations, no doubt he would have given us as express notice of them. From whence it is to be concluded, that the same fort of infants, who had a right to the old feal of the covenant, circum; cision, must now have a right to the new feal,

CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. 345 feal, even baptism. The infant must be the property of some Christian, or else it can have no right to baptism. The Christian must be able to undertake (as far as mortal men, in this uncertain state, can do it) that the baptised infant shall be bred up in the church, and taught all things whatfoever Christ has commanded us to teach his disciples. This Christians can undertake for adopted children and flaves, as well as for their own posterity: fince they are all equally their property, and at their disposal. Accordingly, I suppose, Christians practifed in the beginning. We read, that when Lydia was baptifed, her boushold was baptised with her, Acts, xv1.15. And when the prison-keeper at Philippi was baptised, all bis were baptised too, ver. 33. These histories ought to be compared with the account of Abraham's practifing circumcifion, Genesis, xvII. 23. Abraham took Ishmael his fon, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house; and circumcifed the flesh of their foreskin, in the self same day. Thus all that were born in the jailor's house, and all that were bought with his money, all that were bis property, were baptised in the self same day with him. And, indeed, when the text faith, all his were baptifed, it directly means, 346 The SCRIPTURE-DOCTRINE of

all those that were his property, whether children or slaves. They therefore, who now, or in any age, bring children to baptism, and undertake for them, must be such as have a propriety in them, and the disposal of them; or else they are very impertinent. Nor is it their business to profess, or promise any thing in the child's name: since the child is received to baptism (not upon the account of its own faith, which it is not yet capable of entertaining, but) because it is the property, and at the disposal of a Christian, or a member of the church of Christ.

If a man does not profess the Christian religion, his infants, while they continue at his disposal, can have no right to baptism. If a man, who is now a professed Christian, and a member of a Christian church, should apostatise, and be deservedly thrown out of the communion of the church, his children born after his apostasy and just excommunication, would not derive from him any right to baptism. For, as he himself is not a member of the church, he cannot undertake to educate his child in the church of Christ.

There could be no difficulty with regard to this matter in the primitive church, when the publick affemblies were rightly managed in all respects. At that time all the prayers of the church were confined to the

CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. 347 the Lord's Supper, and none but Christians (i. e. only fuch as could not be proved to be no Christians) were admitted to the communion of the church in breaking of bread, and in prayers. Any one, whether Jew or Heathen, might be present at the reading and exposition of the scriptures; and might hear the publick exhortations to faith, repentance, and improvement in goodness. But when these offices were over, which were chiefly defigned for the unbelieving and impenitent, they were obliged to withdraw, and all the Christians, and none but they, continued, and ingaged in the most solemn worship of prayer, and in celebrating the Lord's supper. At that time all believers, nay, all profesfors of Christianity, who were not for their crimes excommunicated, conflantly attended upon the publick worship; unless they were unavoidably hinder'd. This is the account given us of the constitution and practice of the primitive church in the New Testament. They that gladly received the word, were baptifed: - and they continued stedfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers, Acts, 11, 41, 42. Upon the first day of the week. the disciples, i. e. all the disciples came together to break bread, Chap. xx. 7. We are all partakers of that one bread, 1 Cor. x. 17.

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The Christians, i. e. all of them, came together in the church to eat the Lord's supper; all did shew the Lord's death, 1 Cor. x1. 18, 20, 26. And we must observe, that when St. Paul speaks of prayers made in the church in an unknown tongue, he does not suppose that any unbelievers were present to hear them; but when he speaks of prophesying, or preaching in an unknown tongue, he expresly puts the case of unbelievers being present, Chap. XIV. 23, 24. The same was the practice of the church in the days of Justin Martyr, fourscore years after, who says, at the end of his second apology, " That on the day " called Sunday, all Christians, both in " town and country, came together in " the church; where the scriptures were " read, and an exhortation deliver'd by " the pastor: and then (says he) we all " rife up together, and pray, and partake " of the Lord's supper." The prayers were confined to the Lord's supper, and all who were present at the prayers, partook of the Lord's supper. This practice continued in the church for some ages after; as the learned Mr. Peirce has proved in his Essay concerning giving the eucharist to children, p. 134-141.

Now, if our churches were managed and regulated in this manner, so that all Christians had communion in breaking of bread,

CIRCUMCISION and BAPTISM. and in prayers; and none but Christians were permitted to be present at either; if those that became scandalous, were cast off from our focieties of worship, then there would be no manner of difficulty in determining whose infants have a right to baptism, and whose have not. The rule in that case would be one and uniform, viz. All infants that are the property of any member of the church, have a right to baptism, and to the eucharist too. But infants that are the property of fuch as are not members of the church, of Deists, Fews, or excommunicated persons, have no right to baptism. Whereas, in our days, in the odd and inconfistent manner of managing our publick affemblies, it is hard to fix any rule of conduct. We cannot now confine baptism to the infants of our communicants: because there are many who make a devout profession of Christianity, and constantly attend upon our publick prayers, who are well qualified to partake of the Lord's supper, and yet never attend upon it. It would be hard to deny baptism to the children of such. For if our publick worship were managed as it should, these people would certainly attend upon the whole worship, rather than be banish'd from all the prayers of the church among unbelievers.

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In the present state of things, we can take no better way, than oblige the person, who offers a child to baptism, to make profession of the Christian faith, and to enter into covenant with God. This, in a fort, puts him in the circumstances of a member of the church, and really gives him a right to the Lord's supper. And by entring into covenant with God, he does really bind himself to keep every command of the gospel, particularly that of shewing forth Christ's death at his table. It would be well, if all who come to us to have their children baptised, were minded of this, and would act accordingly. It is really a stupid and inconfistent thing, for a man, at the baptism of his child, to enter into covenant with God, and yet, at the fame time, resolve not to obey this express command of the gospel. As, in strictness of thinking, fuch a person's profession cannot be look'd upon to be fincere; and, in a well regulated state of the church, he would not be admitted to the publick prayers, but would be kept out with unbelievers: so there is a great deal of reason to determine, that his children should not be received to baptism. But as, on the other hand, we go so far as to admit such a person to communion with us in our publick prayers, and he, in fact, makes a profession of faith, and of entring into covenant

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nant with God; it would be very inconfiftent with our other practice, to deny baptism to his children. To this difficulty we are reduced by our feparating the prayers from the Lord's fupper. In the primitive church no fuch difficulty could arise, as was before observed. And if our affairs were as well regulated, we should then have no difficulty neither. If all believers did, every Lord's day, partake of the Lord's supper, nothing more would be requifite for them to do in order to have their infants admitted to baptism, but their promising and undertaking for their Christian education. It would be very impertinent to require such a constant communicant to make a profession of the Chriflian faith, and to enter into covenant with God, at the time of baptifing his child; when he makes the most solemn profesfion, and repeats his covenant every Lord's day, in the presence of the whole church. And even now, in our days, it is evident in the nature of things, that there can be no manner of necessity for obliging any one of our constant communicants, at the time of baptifing his child, to make the faid profession and vow. It is fully enough that he makes this profession and vow constantly at the eucharist; and that, at the time of baptism, he recognizes his title to the child as his property, and ingages to edu352 The SCRIPTURE-DOCTRINE of

educate it in the church, as a disciple of Christ. But to make our conduct, in this inconfistent state of things, look a little uniform, and with a view not to give offence to any, we now are gotten into a method of obliging all that offer infants to baptism, to make the Christian profession and vow. Though it is a little impertinent to require this of constant communicants (especially where communions are frequent:) yet they will rather consent to do this, than that fuch as are not communicants, should be excused from making the said profession and vow. For it would be difficult, in this age, to oblige these to make it, without defiring those to do it too.

I cannot help adding, that some modern liturgies have puzzled the matter yet farther, by asking the infant that is to be baptised, Whether be bimself believes and renounces the devil, &c. and by allowing fuch persons to be sponsors, as have no manner of property in the child, and cannot undertake to dispose of it. These things have raised strong prejudices in the minds of men against infant-baptism, who would otherwise have seen it to be a truly ratio-

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nal and Christian institution.

XX. One end of baptifing infants was, that they might be received to the communion of the church in breaking of bread, and and in prayers. The late learned Mr. Peirce has demonstrably proved, that it was the ancient practice to give the eucharist to children, in an unanswerable essay on this subject: to which I must be leave to refer the reader for satisfaction in the case. And as no one has, after many years, attempted an answer to him, I may well here take it for granted, that infants, in the primitive church were admitted to the communion of Christians. In order to this, it was necessary, according to the rules of our holy religion, that they should be bap-

tifed.

It appears then, that the reason why infant-baptism seems to be an irrational practice, is only this, viz. That these later ages have alter'd the state of the church, and deviated from the primitive practice, which render'd infant-baptism a rational and necessary institution. All things in the Christian religion exactly suit and tally with one another, and the whole appears to be a beautiful scheme. But when later ages made an alteration in some parts of the kheme, and left others unchanged, the correspondence and barmony of the parts were destroy'd. Let matters be now regulated as they were in the beginning; let the Lord's supper be the constant public worship; let all hymns and prayers of the church be offered up at the Lord's supper;

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let unbelievers, and known finners, be present at nothing but the reading the scriptures, the exposition of them, and the exhortations to faith and piery; let these be obliged to withdraw, and none but Christians permitted to remain at the breaking of bread and prayers; then every one would see the expedience and necessity of infant-communion, and confequently of infant-baptism too. Are not the children of Christians beirs of the kingdom of God? should they not then be own'd as such? But if they were excluded from the communion of the church among unbelievers and wicked men, that have no manner of title to falvation, would not this represent fuch infants as being in the same unsafe state? As they are really children of God, is it not congruous, that they should be received to communion with the other children of God in breaking of bread, and in prayers? As they are own'd to have a title to salvation, are they not members of the Christian church? Is it then suitable to their character, to rank them with Heathens and excommunicated finners? Should not the church rather receive them to communion as fellow Christians? According to the ancient constitution of the church, the infants of Christians cannot be present at the prayers, unless they are prefent at the Lord's supper too. Either then we

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we must exclude them from both, or admit them to both. The former would rank them with such only as do not at all belong to the Christian church, and as have no title to salvation. The latter method would treat them as Christians, and heirs of salvation, according as the real state of their case is. And, in order to their being received to the communion of the church, every one sees, they ought to be baptised; and that the baptism of infants is a necessary and beautiful part of the true primitive Christian scheme.

XXI. The primitive manner of baptifing was (usually at least) dipping or plunging the person under water. This is now so universally acknowledged on all hands, that there is no occasion to say much on this head. It will be sufficient to observe, that the scripture speaks of persons being buried in baptism (Rom. v1. 4.) of having their bodies washed with pure water (Heb. x. 22.) and of water-baptism, as putting away the filth of the flesh (1 Pet. 111. 21.) which expressions evidently allude to, and suppose the dipping of the whole body, or the burying it under the water. Accordingly the Christian churches continued the practice of baptifing by immersion (excepting in a case of necessity) through all ages, and in all countries, till of late. Nay,

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as far as I can find, it is still the practice of all the Christian churches in the world, excepting only the church of Rome, and those Protestant churches that came out of her. All other churches agree in retaining immersion, infant-baptism, and infantcommunion too. The practice of dipping infants in baptism, was not left off here in England much above a hundred years ago. In the thirtieth of the canons, made in 1603. the convocation said; The minister dipping the infant in water, or laying water upon the face of it, as the manner also is, &c. which words imply, that at that time the most common method was dipping; though laying water upon the face was sometimes, though not usually, practised. Accordingly the old editions of the Common-prayer prescribed only dipping; and, in the present edition, dipping is still required; and pouring water on the child only permitted in case the sureties certify that the child is weak.

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If the ancient method of baptifing had been continued, and the Lord's supper had been the constant public worship, and all Christian public prayers confined thereto; I dare say, we should never have heard of any Christians disputing against the baptism of infants. The reason why Austin and Pelagius never heard, or read of such a sect, was, because the constitution of the church

church in their day, was such as I have mention'd. For it was impossible for any one then to resuse them baptism, when they were admitted to the communion of the church, in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

XXII. It is no way necessary, that baptism should be administer'd in a church, where Christians are met together for public worship; but it may as well be administer'd in a river, or in a private house. John baptised Christ in the river Jordan, when no other, part of worthip was there perform'd. Philip baptifed the Ethiopian eunuch in a desert, and, perhaps, no one was present but themselves. The eunuch's servant, or servants, might stand at a distance, to take care of the chariot and horses, Acts, VIII. 26, 38. Thus Paul baptifed the jailor at Philippi, and all his house, at midnight, Acts, xv1. 25, 33. From whence it will also follow, that sponjors, or sureties, are intirely unnecessary, and superfluous. There could be none for the jailor, or the Ethiopian eunuch. And there can be no need for any now, at the baptism of grown persons; nor for any others at the baptism of an infant, but such as have a right to dispose of the infant, as their property.

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DISCOURSE IX. Of Schism and Heresy.

T is a matter of very great importance rightly to understand the meaning of the words schism and beresy. It is not a piece of idle criticism, and useless speculation, which men may safely differ about: for the scripture has condemn'd them as fins of like enormous guilt with adultery and murder. It is therefore of infinite consequence to know what these fins truly are, that we may not fall into them, and into condemnation upon their account, while we flatter our felves that we have not contracted the least part of their guilt; and that, on the other hand, we may not uncharitably, and unrighteously condemn the innocent. As Almighty God, our \$0vereign Ruler and Judge, has expresly told us, in the scripture, that schism and beresy are damning fins, we must search the scripture to know what is the nature of thele Our notions, with regard to the nature of them, cannot be fafely form'd according to the definitions which fallible men

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of SCHISM and HERESY. 359 men of later ages have given of schism and beresy, but must be derived immediately from the scriptures themselves. And it becomes me, and every reader, seriously, in the fear of God, and with the utmost impartiality, to consider what the scripture really teaches on this very important subject.

The apostle Paul mentions both these sins in the same sentence, and very plainly states the nature of them, and the difference between them, I Cor. XI. 18, 19. When ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions (in the Greek, schisms) among you; and I partly believe it: for there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made mani-

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From this text it is evident, in the first place, that schifm and herely (how much soever alike) are not exactly the same thing. For, at the time of the apostle's writing this epistle, there were actually schisms or divisions subsisting in the church of Corinth: whereas, at that time the hereses were not begun, but were then predicted as yet suture.

From the same passage we further learn, that schiss is a division in the church, or congregation, while both contending parties meet together for worship in the same place, and at the same time. When ye come

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together (saith the apostle) in the church, I hear that there be schisms among st you. He adds, that they came together into one place, ver. 20. Their schism lay particularly in this; That when they came together with a professed defign to eat the Lord's supper, they did not tarry for one another, but every one took before other bis own supper, ver. 21, 23. By this means the church, or congregation, which ought to be one body, was split into separate parties and factions. Another inscance of schism among the Corinthians was, their being divided into parties and factions upon account of different teachers. Some were zealous for St. Paul, while others were as violently attach'd to the false apofile that opposed him. In this fiding and making parties, there was schism, and only schism; because both parties still met together for publick worship. The guilt of this schifm lay intirely on the side of those that opposed St. Paul. For he was really an apostle of Christ, and guided by the Holy Spirit into all truth: on which accounts the whole church ought to have unanimously submitted to his teaching and authority, and to have rejected all that opposed him, as opposers of Christ.

According to this account which St. Paul gives us of schiss, it appears, that it has no particular respect to discipline

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Of SCHISM and HERESY. 361 more than to doctrine, but may equally relate to either. If parties and factions are raised in a church, or congregation, about a fexton, a clerk, or a pastor; about a doctrine, or a ceremony; about a fundamental article, or a tune of a pfalm, there is in either of the cases equally a schism. Different circumstances, indeed, may occasion different degrees of guilt; and sometimes only one of the parties may be in the wrong, and sometimes both. But still the nature of the schism is the same, viz. a groundless, unchristian, and uncharitable division or faction among the members of the same congregation. The rule by which we must judge and determine where the fault lies, shall be consider'd afterward.

From the passage of the apostle above cited, we also learn the real nature of that beresy which the scripture speaks of as a damning sin. Heresy has its foundation in schism: for when the parties resuse any longer to meet together in the same place, and as one society for public worship, when they form separate assemblies, then there is a heresy. "There are (said the apostle to the Corinthians) already schisms or factions among you, though shill you meet as one society in the church. But the time is coming when, I foresee, the breach will grow wider, and

" and you will form opposite feets, that " will not communicate together." When the apostle says, There must be beresses among you, his meaning is, there certainly will be heresses among you. Thus the word Del frequently signifies, as Aets, IX. 16. I Cor. XV. 53. Rev. I. I. IV. I. And in this manner the French frequently

use Il faut, and Il doit.

The word herefy is a Greek word, which fignifies the same as a sect, or a party. Of this an English reader may easily satisfy himself from our own translation of the bible, wherein the word is often render'd a feet, as Acts, v. 17. where we read of the herefy, or feet of the Sadducees; Acts, xv. 5. the herefy, or feet of the Pharisees; Chap. xxiv. 5. the herefy, or feet of the Nazareans; Chap. xxvi. 5. the strictest Sect of the Jews, meaning the Pharisees; and Chap. xxvIII. 20. where the Jews are introduced as faying, that Christianity was a herefy, or feet every where spoken against. This last text certainly fixes the meaning of another, viz. Acts, xxIV. 14. where St. Paul fays, After the way which the Jews call herefy, so worship I the God of my fathers. But how did the Jews call it a beresy? They said it was a feet of the Nazareens, every where spoken against. In the last cited text therefore, our translators had acted more confistently with them-

Of SCHISM and HERESY. 363 themselves, if they had used the word fect, as in all other places of the Acts, and had put it thus ; After the way which they call a feet, so worship I the God of my fathers. When, in 1 Cor. x1. 19. our tranflators retain'd the Greek word berefies, they took care however to put the word fects in the margin, to explain it. Since in these seven places it unquestionably fignifies sects, it is most reasonable to underfland it in the same sense in the two other passages of the New Testament, where the word berefy is met with. One is Gal. v. 20. where we read of the works of the flesh; fuch as variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, bereses, or sects, envyings, &c. And it is natural to observe, that feet-making, or splitting the church into parties and factions, is a fin of the same kind with those others, among which it is placed. The only remaining place is, 2 Pet. 11. 1. where the apostle prophesies of false teachers, who would bring in damnable herefies, or fects, even denying the Lord (i. e. God the Father) who bought them with the blood of his son. Jude, ver. 4. 1 John, 11. 22.) As the word herefies, every where else, most certainly fignifies sects; so in this place it cannot be thought to mean false doctrines. but must likewise signify sects or divisions. And then St. Peter's whole meaning will appear

appear to be, That those false teachers would endeavour to draw away disciples from the church, and from their rightful pastors, and to raise a party for themselves. who should be called after their name (as Ebionites, Cerinthians, &c.) and renounce communion with the church. It must be observed by the way, that St. Peter does not fay one word of their introducing these fects privily, though our translators do. For St. Peter's word mapercaya has no fuch meaning. IIzea, in such compound words, only fignifies, Without right, illegally, unjustly, or to that purpose. How any of the critics came to mistake in this matter, I cannot conceive.

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When St. Peter calls these sects damnable, or destructive, he means, that the raising those sects would expose the sectaties to eternal damnation, in exact consistence with St. Paul, who reckons bereses, or splitting the church into sects, among the works of the sesh; which, if men do, they shall not inherit the kingdom of God,

Gal. v. 20, 21.

As from comparing all the places together, where the word berefy is met with in the New Testament, it appears, that it fignifies a sect: so it must be concluded, that a beretic is a sectuary, a maker, or a follower of a sect. I beg leave farther to illustrate this matter, by setting before the reader

Of SCHISM and HERESY. 365 reader an excellent paffage of the learned Martin Bucer, in his epiftle dedicatory to the university of Marpurg, placed before his exposition of the four gospels, as I find it quoted in Brandt's history of the reformation in the Low countries, Vol. II. Book XXV. p. 269. Edit. Fol. " The " apostle (says he) does not esteem those " to be beretics, who were a little tenaci-" ous of some erroneous doctrines: for this " was fometimes the case of the best of " men. - Heresy is, according to St. " Paul's description of it, The lust of form-" ing fects, and of rending in pieces the "church of Christ: and a beretic is one " that is fick of that disease. But he, who " falling into error, imbraces his own, or " other mens fancies, for divine doctrines, " and maintains them as fuch, is no be-" retic; provided he takes care not to se-" parate from them who feek Christ as " well as he, and is neither a leader, nor " follower of faction. So that there is this " difference between one that is infected " with berefy, and him that is guilty of " error: the beretic is one who separates " from the brethren, and renounces all " Christian communion with them; but the " erring person is he, who, though he has " fome controversy with the brethren, yet " keeps up the right of communion with "them inviolably. Besides, though both " the

" the beretic, and he that is guilty of er-

" stakes: yet the latter does it much

" more mildly and gently than the former,

" as the one has a greater stock of charity

than the other. From hence then follows the third distinction, to wit, that

" we are obliged to forbear Christian com-

" munion, for a while at least, with a

" beretic, because he separates from us:

" but we ought never to do it with an er-

" ring brother."

It feems to me necessary to be added, that a man's being a beretic, in the scripture sense of the word, does not necessarily imply, that he breaks the communion of the church upon the account of do-Etrines. If he does not entertain any one false doctrine, or if in every point of do-Ctrine he perfectly agrees with the church from which he separates; still he is a heretic, if he splits the church into opposite parties about a ceremony, the election of a pastor, or any such thing. Though, 'tis true, the most usual occasion of breaking the communion of the church has arisen from mens entertaining different opinions, and teaching different doctrines. And hence it has come to pass, that the do-Etrines themselves have been called heresies. But from the beginning it was not fo. The heresies of the Pharisees, of the Nazarenes,

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Of SCHISM and HERESY. 367 renes, &c. mention'd in the scriptures before cited, were not the doctrines which these men held, but the sects which they constituted. The word berefy, in other writers, also fignifies the men, not the opinion. Thus Hesychius and Suidas mention a heresy or sect of Hypsistarians, who were so called, because, though in some respects they were Heathens, yet they worship'd only the most high God. These writers do not fay, that the opinion of these men was their beresy; but that the men themselves were the heresy or the sect. Υλιταρι (says Hesychius) αιρεσις φασι των τον ελισον σεβομενων. Suidas his expression is still more strong, and more full to my purpose; Aipeois 715 ulisaeloi oi tor ulison καλενίες: i. e. The Hypsistarians are a beresy or sect. In the modern sense of the word herely, the Hypsistarians cannot be charged with it upon the account of their worshiping the most high God alone: for in this they did well, and hereby made profession of a doctrine that is not only true, but the fundamental doctrine of all true religion. From hence then it appears, that the word berefy, of old, did not fignity false doctrine, or fundamental errors, how much soever some moderns have affected to use it in this sense. Let mens opinions be true or false, good or bad, it is all one in this respect, the men that agreed in

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in those opinions, were of old called a berefy or feet. We read among the Jews, of the heresy or sect of the Pharisees, the herefy or fect of Sadducees, the herefy or fect of the Karraites, the herefy or fect of the Essenes: yet 'tis very certain, that some of these were far enough from entertaining any dangerous or fundamental er-The Karraites are unquestionably right in rejecting all traditions, and adhering only to the written word. They agree with the other Jews in all other matters. Neither do they absolutely reject all traditions, but only refuse to allow them the same authority as they do to the written word: which yet all the other Yews do. In this, I am fure, there is nothing that can be called herely in the modern sense of the word: and yet, according to the language of all the ancients, the Karraites are a heresy or a sect. If the reader would fee more about them, he may confult the fifth book of the second part of Dean Prideaux his connection, &c. The principal distinguishing of the Pharisees and Essenes was their zeal for the traditions of the elders, to which they ascribed equal authority as to the written word it self. And when Josephus uses the word beresy in speaking of them, he thereby never means their do-Etrines, but the men themselves, i. e. the sect. In

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In the fame fense the word is used by Heathen writers also, when they speak of the several beresies or sects of the philosophers. Diogenes Laertius, in his introduction to the Lives of the philosophers, fpeaking of moral philosophy, says there were ten beresies, or sects of it, as the accademic, peripatetic, stoic, &c. but that Hippobotus, in his book concerning heresies or sects, says, There were nine beresies and institutions. He adds a, that it is disputed, whether the Pyrrhonian or Sceptic be a beresy or not. "Some (says he) say, " that it is a berefy in one respect, but not " in another. For (or yet) it seems to be " a herefy or fect. We call that institu-" tion a herefy (fay they) which follows, " or feems to follow a fort or reasoning " fuited to the appearances of things: in

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Evice de xala Ti mer aigeoir evai paoir aulir [Thr Σκεπ[κην] καζα τι δε ε. Δοκει μεν γας [al. δε] αιζεσις ειναι. Αιρεσιν δε λεγομεν (φασι) την λογω τινι κα α το φαινομενον ακολεθεσαν, η δοκεσαν ακολεθεν. Καθ' ο ευλογως αν αιρεσιν την Σκεπ τικην καλοιμεν. Ει δε αιρεσιν νοιμέν σεσακλίσιν εν δογμασίν ακολεθίαν έχεσιν. κκετ. an weggayogevoilo aigegis. Ou yag exes Soyuala. The reason why some have mistaken the meaning of this passage, 18, because they did not observe the contrast, or contraditinction between roy w and Soy wast. Noy & here cannot lignify a scheme of opinions, but must refer to the sceptic's ten arguments (called Toxos, Tegros, Loyos) by which they labour'd to prove, that nothing is certain. See Sext. Empyric. Hypotyp. I. Cap. xiv. et Diog. Laert. in vita Fyrrhonis. Negonalois is a faction. See Clem. Rom. Epift. I. Cap. x vii.

" which respect we may justly call the " Sceptic philosophers a heresy or sect. But " if we define a heresy to be a faction in " opinions, which have a mutual con-" nection, it cannot be called a heresy or " fect, fince it has no opinions." From both these definitions, and from the whole discourse, it is plain, that the word beresy did not fignify the opinions themselves, but the men that held the opinions, or argued and reason'd without having any opinions at Thus Cicero, in the preamble to his Paradoxa, fays, That Cato was a perfect Stoic, and was of that berefy or feet which follow'd none of the ornaments of lan-Here also the word berely guage, &c. does not fignify fundamental errors, or falle doctrines, or indeed, any doctrines at all, but the men that agreed with the founder of the Stoic feet, in his manner of talking and reasoning.

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Every sect or herefy among the philosophers had something common to all the sect, which was however peculiar to it self, and distinguish'd it from the other sects. Generally they were distinguish'd by a set of doctrines, or opinions, as the Stoics, Epicureans, &c. But the Pyrrhonians, or Sceptics, were distinguish'd from all other sects, by saying, Ouder of Louer, We determine mothing; and by using certain arguments to prove that it is not possible for us to know,

Of SCHISM and HERESY. 371 know, that any thing really is what it appears to be. All that concur'd in this way of talking and reasoning, in imitation of Pyrrho, were truly of one sect with him.

The same must be said concerning the fests among Christians. The Socinians, for instance, are a feet or heresy; because they agree with Socinus, in certain doctrines or opinions, relating to Christianity, and impose them as terms of communion: by which peculiar doctrines they are distinguished from all other Christians. Jo. Jacob, and his disciples were as much a berely or sect, because they distinguish'd themselves from all other Christians, by wearing their beards, and holding it unlawful to shave them. For the word berefy, in the ancient writers above cited, whether acred or profane, never fignifies of what hind the opinions of the fect are, whether true or false, or if erroneous, whether fundamentally or not fundamentally fo. According to their manner of speaking, therebre, Jo. Jacob, and his disciples, were as much a berefy as the Sadducees or Ebionites. If it be ask'd, Is there no difference then between true doctrines, and false? I readiyanswer; There is: and some doctrines are destructive and damnable. But still it s certain, that the scripture never calls

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these false doctrines by the name of heresies. B b 2

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But there beresy always signifies the persons,

i. e. the feet.

Answerably, the word beretic can fignify nothing but a feetary, either an author or a follower of a sect. When Tertullus called St. Paul a ringleader of a fect, he meant the same as if he had said, in one word, a heretic. Thus Diogenes Laertius, in his life of Zeno, fays, That Aristo obtain'd the title of a beretist; which is much the same as a bertic, or rather a berefiarch, i.e. the author or founder of a fect. And from him his disciples were called Aristonians. This calling him a beretist, or beretic, did not imply that his doctrine was false or dangerous, but only that he differ'd from other fects, and gain'd disciples. And Suidas calls the Pyrrhonians, beretics, as they were disciples and followers of Pyrrho.

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Among the philosophers in the Heathen world, there was no great harm in mens being thus divided into different sects, in point of philosophy. There was no manner of obligation laid upon all men to be followers of Zeno: they might as lawfully follow Socrates or Aristotle. Upon this account the sects of philosophers are spoken of as different things, without any note of reproach. But the matter is quite o-

therwife in Christianity.

Jesus Christ is, under God, our only master; and we must be his disciples, and no one's

Of SCHISM and HERESY. 373 one's else, in matters of religion. therefore it must be unlawful to form any fects among Christians. Christ intended to forbid this, when he faid, Matt. XXIII. 8, 9, 10. Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your teacher (didagnata, see Mill in loc.) even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for One is your Father, who is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for One is your Master, even Christ. As all Christians therefore have one and the same Father, even God, who is their supreme Instructor, they must not choose any man, or any body of men on earth to be their father, or to dictate to their faith in matters of religion. And as Christ is, under God, their only Teacher and Guide, they ought not to submit themselves to any man, as an authoritative guide in points of faith or worship. And as all Christians are brethren, it would be unnatural and wicked for any Christian to set up himself as a bead or master over his bretbren, or to divide them into sects, who ought to unite and love as brethren. Agreeably to this, St. Paul puts a case (for the case did not really happen) of the Christians at Corinth, being divided into four fects, under Paul, Apollos, Peter, and Christ, 1 Cor. 1. 11, 12, 13. It hath been declared to me of you, my brethren, —that there are contentions B b 3 among

among you. Now this I say (for a smuch as every one of you faith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ.) Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or, Were ye baptised into the name of Paul? The reader will please to observe by the way, that mens not taking notice of the parenthesis I have placed in these words, has occasion'd their missing the true construction of them. The apoftle's meaning plainly is; " Forasmuch " as you say, I am of Paul, and I of Apol-" los, &c." therefore, in my turn, I say, Is Christ divided? &c. It is true indeed, that Paul, Apollos, and Peter, did not set up themselves as heads or leaders of sects in Christianity: if they had, they would have been beretics. Or, if the people at Corinth had divided themselves into distinct fects, and had call'd themselves (after the names of Paul, Apollos, and Peter) Paulites, Apollosians, Peterites, and had regarded him whom they had chosen as their own head and leader, in opposition to the other two, they had been beretics or fectaries. But they that took Christ for their only leader, and called themselves after his name, Christians, and consider'd Paul, Apollos, and Peter, as ministers of Christ, and belpers of their faith and virtue, made no sect, but were truly catholic Christians.

It does not appear indeed, that the Corinthians divided themselves into parties under Paul, Apollos, and Peter. The perfons, about whom they were really divided, were St. Paul, and a false apostle, a Judaizer, who fet up himself to oppose St. Paul at Corintb. This is eafily gather'd from what St. Paul fays in many places of his two epistles to the Corinthians, particularly from 1 Cor. IV. 6. These things, brethren, I have in a figure, transferred to my self, and to Apollos, for your sakes; that we might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, That no one of you be puffed up for one against another. A division was made, and a faction rais'd in the church of Corinth, for the Fewish false apostle, against St. Paul. But, for their sakes, and to give as little offence as possible, St. Paul chose not to put the case as it was, but to put another case, which his adversaries would easily allow to be parallel; inafmuch as it admitted (for argument fake) that the false apostle was equally a minister and apostle, as Apollos or Peter. If this bad been so, still it had been a fin in the people, to have formed parties and factions about them. They were not baptised into the name of Paul, 1. e. they were not by baptism made disciples of Paul; they did not thereby devote themselves to him as their bead and leader

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in religion. For the same reason then they ought not to take the false apostle as their head and leader, but consider him, at most, as a minister of Christ. St. Paul farther adds, Chap. 111. 4, &c. While one faith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal, having among you envying, strife, and divisions, which are some of the works of the flesh? ver. 3. Gal. v. 19, 20, 21. Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos? Are they heads of parties in the church? No; but they are ministers, or servants of Christ, by whom ye believed. I have planted, Apollos water'd, as God's servants, but God gave the increase: and so he is your proper head and leader. He that planteth, and he that watereth, are one; and therefore you must not look upon them as distinct heads of different sects. We are labourers together with God, or rather, as the Greek phrase should have been render'd; We are fellowlabourers under God, i. e. Apollos and I are fellow-labourers with respect to one another; and we both received our work, our commission, and our success from God. Therefore we must not be look'd upon as heads of fects. We carry on the same cause, and act in perfect concert and harmony. The Judaizer ought to have acted in the same concord with St. Paul. But because he did not; because he opposed him, of Schism and Heresy. 377 him, rais'd a party to himself, and taught them for doctrines, the commandments of Judaizers, he was a real lectary or beretic.

After what has been faid, it will be easy to explain what St. Paul says of a beretic, Titus, III. 10, II. A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject; knowing that he, who is such, is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself. What I take to be the true interpretation of the character, felf-condemn'd, has been often published, and yet has been strangely over-look'd of late years. The oldest writer, that I have found it in, is ferom, who, in his comment upon the place, fays, " A heretic is faid to be condemn'd of himse felf; because (while a fornicator, an " adulterer, a murderer, and other vici-" ous persons, are cast out of the church " by the priests) heretics pass sentence upon " themselves, and of their own accord de-" part from the church: which departure " is as a condemnation passed upon them " by their own consciences." The learned Estius was of the same opinion, saying, " By this expression, A beretic is con-" demn'd of bimself, the apostle distin-" guishes him from other excommunica-" ted persons. For others use to be thrown " out of the church against their wills; " but, as St. Jude says, heretics separate " themselves, that is, they excommunicate " them-

" themselves. Seeing therefore excommu-" nication is one fort of condemnation, it " follows, that a heretic condemns bim-" felf." To much the same purpose the learned bishop Barlow (in his cases of consciences, p. 69.) says, after Grotius and Justellus, " That herefy and schism do both agree in this, that they make a " rent in the church, and so break the bond of peace, and ecclefiaftical union. "Whence it is that the apostle calls him " self-condemn'd, or rather, a seipso sepa-" ratus, one that broaches an error, and " separates from the church. The he-" retic St. Paul speaks of is such a one " who (besides his erroneous opinion) is " schismatical, and not only makes a " separation from the church himself, but seduces others, to the disturbance of " the publick peace: which crime is vi-" fible, and confessedly punishable." At the same time, the bishop quotes the pasfage before cited from Ferom, and approves it. Dr. Hammond was intirely in the same sentiment. In his paraphrase of Titus, III. 10 he defines a beretic to be one " who maketh any division in the " church, that teacheth any doctrine con-" trary to that which hath been taught by " Christ and the apostles, and, that he " may get followers, separates from the " church, from the communion of Chri-" Stians

Of SCHISM and HERESY. 379 " stians there." In his note, among other things, he fays, that a heretic " gathers " and receives disciples or followers to " himself, in opposition to, or separation " and division from the church; - a " leader of a faction - that leads others " into separated assemblies or congreations." The learned doctor's paraphrase of ver. 11. runs thus: " Knowing that such a man is " a perverse, wilful finner, inflicting that " punishment on himself, which the go-" vernors of the church are wont to do " on malefactors, that is, cutting himself " off from the church, of which he was a " member." In the note he fays, " Being " condemned of bimself, is an expression of " his feparation from, and disobedience to " the church.—He that thus breaks off " from the unity of the church, doth, in " effect, inflict that punishment on him-" felf, which the church useth to male-" factors, that is, cutting off from the " church: which, he being a heretic (and " therein a schismatic also) doth volun-" tarily, without the judge's sentence." The doctor also quotes and approves the above cited passage of Ferom. Afterward he adds; " Every one which separates " from the orthodox church, whose mem-" ber and subject he is (and this every be-" retic and schismatic doth) is properly " faid to be felf-condemn'd. There is no " need

" need to proceed to excommunication, because—he inflicts this upon himself.

"The appointment therefore is more a-

" greeable to his case, that men avoid him, ver. 10. as one that is already ex-

" communicated by his own, and so needs

" not the judge's sentence."

I will not undertake to defend every particular expression here cited from these learned men. Yet, in the general, what they say, appears to be exactly right and just; I cannot find, that either of them was weak enough to imagine, that herefy, in scripture, signifies a doctrine condemn'd by an establish'd church. They all agree, that whatever false doctrines a man held, still he was not a beretic, if he did not separate from the church. So that, according to these learned men, the nature of herefy is caufing divisions, or making factions in the church. And the heretic condemns himself by passing, as it were, the fentence of excommunication upon himself. It should feem then, that there is no manner of necessity, that a man teach false do-Etrines in order to his being a heretic. If he splits the church into parties about a ceremony, or the choice of a pastor, though perfectly right in all his notions of Christianity, he is a beretic. For it is not false doctrine, but separation that makes the heretic.

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When he is said to be condemn'd of himfelf, it is not meant, that he believes in his own conscience, that he finneth in making the breach in the church: this is what beretics very feldom do. We have read of men that would kill good Christians, and yet think it to be so far from being a fin, as that it would be doing God fervice, John, xvi. 2. In like manner, they that wickedly cause divisions in the church of Christ, have sometimes, I suppose, usually, through mistake, apprehended, that they were doing the will of God. And yet they were heretics or feetaries notwithstanding. And as the false perfuafion of the murderers, now mention'd, would not excuse them, fince they had sufficient means of being better inform'd, and might, with ease, if they would think coolly and impartially, have feen that persecuting Christians to death, is really murder, and a damning fin: so the sectaries or beretics of all ages, if they had confider'd things impartially, might, with the greatest ease, have discover'd that their causing divisions in the church, was that very crime of berefy, of which the holy scripture says, that they who are guilty of it, shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Perhaps it will now be ask'd, if a beretic be one who has separated himself from the church; what occasion was there to

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order Titus to reject him? It is easy to answer, That if a man had separated from the church in which Titus prefided, and refused to hold communion with Titus, and bis church any more, there would have been no occasion for ordering Titus to reject him. It is evident therefore, the apostle speaks of a beretic or feetary, who had made a breach in another church, suppose at Rome, or Ferusalem: If such a sectary should happen to come to Crete, and defire to be received to communion in the church where Titus prefided; the apostle order'd Titus to reject fuch a factious person, and to refuse to admit him to Christian communion. A follower, and even the leader of a faction at Jerusalem, may well be supposed capable of desiring communion with Titus at Crete. Perhaps the root of the faction might be (like that at Corinth, as represented in St. Clement's epistle) envy against the particular elders of one church. And yet the faction might have no manner of enmity against Titus. So that 'tis very possible, that the same persons who ingaged in a wicked fedition against the pastors of a church at Jerusalem or Corinth, might, when they had occasion to travel into Crete, desire to join in communion with Titus. But if Titus knew they were factious, and sectaries at Jerusalem, he was obliged to reject them at Crete. It

Of SCHISM and HERESY. 383.

It does not appear from any thing the scripture says about a heretic, that he is always a man, in other respects also, wicked and immoral. The berefy of the Pharifees, St. Paul fays, was the strictest, or most religious sect; and himself, while a zealous Pharisee, walk'd in all good conscience toward God, Acts, xxv1 5. xx111. 1. And the beretic or fectary, who opposed St. Paul at Corinth, it is likely, fell into no other immorality. For if he had, St. Paul would not have fail'd to mention it, in order the more effectually to put an end to the faction. It is very true, that heretics, or fectaries, have often been openly profane or immoral, like those mention'd 2 Pet. 11. 3, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19. Jude, ver. 4, 11, 16. But their heresy did not lie in their lewdness or covetousness, but merely in their breaking the peace of the church, and forming a sect. This would have constituted them beretics, if they had been ever fo virtuous in every other respect. And, though the leaders of sects have often been influenced by ambitious or covetous views; yet their followers may happen to be free from those fins, and be chargeable with no immorality besides that of following a feet, which is indeed a much greater fin than the world commonly imagines.

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From this plain and scriptural account of the nature of the fin of beresy, or sect. making, it appears that it is equally easy in all ages to know what is that herefy, which will exclude men from the kingdom of God, Gal. v. 21. and who is the beretic, whom all good Christians, like Titus, are obliged, after the first and second admonition, to reject. If a sectary come to us, we must admonish him to forsake and renounce his dividing principles and practices, and to return to the communion of the true Catholic church. If he confesses his fault, feriously professes repentance, and promises to live in unity for the time to come, we must receive him as a brother Christian with open arms. But if he is obstinate in his dividing practices, and will not hearken to our repeated admonitions, we must reject him as utterly unworthy of Christian communion.

There is no need of a power of searching mens hearts, in order to find out who is a beretic in the scripture sense of the word. It is he who CAUSETH a division in the church of Christ, according to that of the apostle, Rom. xvi. 17. I beseech you, brethren, mark them that cause divisions [schiss and sects] and offences, contrary to the dostrine [of unity and charity, which] ye have learned, and avoid them. It is not an indifferent thing, whether

Of SCHISM and HERESY. 385 ther we avoid sectaries or not: we are obliged by this divine command, to avoid and separate from them. It is false and barbarous to fay, that the cause and fault of the division are always on the side of the minority. Differenters think, that the established church is the cause of the division between her and them. And the establish'd church very justly charges the Papists, though a much more numerous body, as the cause of the division between those two opposite communions. When there is a division, and there are herefies or fects, and opposite communions among professed Christians, it is a matter of the greatest importance for Christians seriously and in the fear of God, to consider on which fide the cause and fault of the divifion lie, that so they may not follow a berefy or feet, fince they that do so shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

The first thing to be observed concerning this matter is, That there is in fact, and necessarily must be One, and the same immutable rule throughout all Christendom, to determine what is a beresy, and what is not, who is a heretic or sectary, and who is not. I have nothing to do with that which weak or peevith men have been pleas'd to call heresy in different countries. As they differ in their notions of the thing it self, they cannot but lay down different

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rules about finding it out. But that sime which the One rule of Christianity, the holy scripture, calls herefy, must necessarily be the same in all ages, and in all places, without exception. That which is herefy in England, is equally herefy in Scotland or France. And every thing which is really herefy in Scotland or France, is equally herefy in England: just as the sin which the scripture calls murder, is equally murder in all times and places, and must every where be judged of by the very same invariable rule.

The one rule to discover what is the sin which the scripture calls beresy, and who is the beretic that is guilty of it, may be demonstrably discover'd by the following series of Propositions.

I. God alone has a right and authority to fix the terms of acceptance for apostate creatures, and to appoint the kind and manner of divine worship. Unless God has appointed it, we cannot possibly know that he will accept it. These things are obvious at first sight, and farther confirm'd by God's own express saying; In vain do they worship me, teaching for dostrines the commandments of men, Mark, VII. 7. If any Christian still thinks the proof insufficient, I would beg him to ask himself, Why he does not offer up (not a fewish sacrifice, but)

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Of SCHISM and HERESY. 387 but) a lamb in sacrifice to God, as a representation and memorial of Jesus the lamb of God, who was sacrificed for us? Is not this the real reason, that God has not required it; and therefore we cannot know that it will be pleafing and acceptable to him? Do not Christians really abstain from such a practice, because they are fensible it can be no more than a doctrine and commandment of men, and confequently that fuch worship would be in vain? It is then a general maxim, that God will not accept any worship, unless it be bis own institution. All the rest is vain and trifling. Hence it necessarily follows. That

II. No congregation must admit into their worship any thing which they believe God has not required them to do in his worship. The reason is, because if they did admit it, they would worship God in vain, and break his command.

III. In order to this, every church, i. e. every fingle congregation, is obliged feriously, impartially, and in the fear of God, to examine by the scripture what God has required them to do in his worship, and what he has not required. They are obliged to this, that they may not provoke God by worshiping him according to the Cc 2 doctrines

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388 Of SCHISM and HERESY. doctrines and commands of men; and that their worship may not be in vain, and may not be rejected.

IV. Every congregation or church is obliged to do all those things in the worship of God, which they themselves, after an impartial examination, really believe God has required them to do therein. If they do not, they cannot be sincere and accepted with God.

V. That church or congregation, which does all those things, and those things only, in divine worship, which, after a fincere and impartial examination, they verily believe God has required them to do in his worship, cannot be charged with making a breach among Christians, whoever they are that separate from it. Suppose a church thinks it their duty to fing plalms, and bymns, and spiritual songs in their public worship; they must do it, because they think God has required them to do it. If others upon this account, refuse to join in communion in that church; it is manifest that church is no way in fault. The fame is true in every other supposable case. If there is, if there can be any church in the world, which, after impartial examination into the matter, is really persuaded, that God has required them to fay in their public

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of Schism and Heresy. 389 worship, Glory be to Jesus and Mary: As it was, is, and ever shall be a, that church unquestionably ought to say this, that she may not neglect to obey what she esteems to be a divine command. But if no impartial inquirers can think so, this is out of the question.

VI. That church or congregation, which practifes any thing in the worship of God, which themselves do not believe God has required them to do therein, makes, by this means, an unnecessary term of communion, and divides the church into parties, and is alone chargeable with the guilt of making the division. This necessarily follows from the preceding propositions, and, indeed, is so obvious in it self, that every Christian in the world, is, in fact convinced of it, and does, in his turn, openly acknowledge it. If we ask a Protestant in any country, what causes the division between the Papists and the Protestants, he will readily own, that it is caused by the unscriptural terms of communion made by the Papists. If we should ask the Papists that live in any part of the Greek church, what causes

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a Bishop Stillingsleet says, This form is to be met with in a Popish book, intitled, Contemplations of the life and glory of holy Mary, the mother of Jesus; printed, permississue errorum, 1685. p. 22. The citation is in a pamphlet of the bishop's, intitled, The doctrines and practices of the church of Rome truly represented, 1686. p. 28.

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the division between them; the Papists will readily answer the unscriptural terms and impositions of the Greek church. The Lutherans will say the same of the Calvinists, and the Calvinists of the Lutherans. An episcopal Dissenter in Scotland will readily fay, that the division there is caufed by the unscriptural terms of communion in the established church of Scotland. And a Scotch Presbyterian refiding in England, will fay the same of the establish'd church here. And the truth is, they are all so far in the right: for the only thing which causes divisions, beresies, or sects in the Christian church, is mens imposing unscriptural articles in their creeds, and introducing and continuing uninstituted ceremonies in their public worship.

So that now we have found out the heretic, i. e. the person whom God, in the holy scripture condemns as such. He is a sectary, one who teaches for doctrines the commandments of men, who practises in divine worship what he believes God has no where instituted, or commanded him to do; whereby he excludes from his communion all those Christians, who carefully adhere to the rules and appointments of the gospel. This heretic, or sectary, condemns himself, as he raises a party that is distinguish'd by mere human phrases, doctrines and ceremonies, and cuts himself off from the true cathorial.

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Of SCHISM and HERESY. 391 Catholic church, which hath nothing buman in her, but willingly receives all fincere Christians to ber worship, which is all of divine institution.

It appears then, that the chief beretic now in the world, is the bishop of Rome. He has rais'd and united to himself a great party or faction, who, where-ever they dwell, make innumerable things parts of their worship, and necessary to communion with them, which God never required them to fay, or do in public worship. No divine command can be pretended for the submission of the whole church to the bishop of Rome; for the worship of angels, the virgin Mary, and other faints; for the worship of images, and of the host; for prayers in an unknown tongue; for making images and pictures of the invisible God; for the celibacy of the clergy; and ten thousand other things, which are made as necessary to communion in the church of Rome, as love to God, or faith in Christ. buman institutions in the worship of God, which are made terms of communion in that church, are the only cause of the division between her and the Protestants. Let her only conform her worship to the divine rule of the scriptures, and we shall be one with her in a moment. As long as he continues to teach for doctrines the com-Cc 4

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mandments of men, so long she is beretical, and the author of that sect, which is denominated Popish. And most justly is it called a beresy or sect, because its center of union is the greatest beretic or sectary in the world, viz. the bishop of Rome, who impiously sets up himself as the head of a faction, in opposition to the plain, divine rules of faith and worship laid down by Christ in the gespel.

A Protestant church is, in like manner beretical, if it makes such things terms of communion as she does not believe Christ has required her to appoint as such. I have heard of a Protestant church in France, heretofore, that would not receive an English gentleman to communion, because he chose to kneel at the Lord's sup-I own, he had not fo much as the least appearance of a warrant for kneeling at a fealt, in all the word of God: yet as he had no intention of idolatry, and in the fincerity of his heart, thought it his duty to kneel, the French church ought to have received him as a Christian, though erring brother: and the church that would not do it, was certainly beretical, and made a feet among Christians. To do justice to truth, and to Catholic Christianity, I must add, that it is equally beretical, or sect-making, to infift upon kneeling as a term of communion.

VII. The

of the cross.

If it be ask'd then, On whom will the guilt of heresy be charged? I answer; Not on any of those sincere Christians, who, after an impartial examination, are verily

cere, may be as fully satisfied, that he intended to confine baptism to the adult. But, without the least appearance of uncharitableness, I may venture to say, that there is no man in the world, who believes that Christ has order'd his ministers to sign every baptised person with the sign

persuaded, God has required them to profeis, speak, and do in his worship all those things, which they there do. When the scripture said of beresies, and the like crimes, that they who do fuch things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God; it does not denounce the curse against such fincere Christians as I have mention'd. If it did, then none could hope for falvation, fince none can be absolutely certain, that they rightly understand the rules of worship, and the terms of communion which God has fixed. Where men honeftly feek after his will with a fincere purpose of doing it, his infinite righteoufness and mercy will make allowances for their involuntary mistakes, and not impute them to their condemnation.

But it cannot, in reason, be expected that God should make the same allowance for the avoidable and known errors of men. If they will do such things in the worship of God as they themselves do not believe God has required at their hands; if they will make the acknowledged commandments and inventions of men, terms of communion with them, and thereby split the church into parties; they are undoubtedly heretics, or sectaries, and infected with all the guilt, and exposed to all the condemnation of heresy. Such men

Of SCHISM and HERESY. 395 cannot make the plea of fincerity, and therefore they cannot expect to enter into the kingdom of God.

VIII. The foundation of the greatest part of the berefies or fects in the church has been the uniting feveral congregations under one common government. Originally, every congregation was independent of all others, and was subject to no foreign authority. Accordingly we find, that in the New Testament, the word church never fignifies a diocesan, or a national church; but only the Catholic church, or one fingle congregation. This is too plain to be difputed. This independency of congregations, ought to have been maintained in all ages: and it is impossible they should have a right, fince it is in it felf an immorality to give it up. Every congregation has a natural and unalienable right to worship God in that manner, as they really believe, after an impartial examination, to be of divine institution, and acceptable to God. they cannot exercise this right, if any foreigner (i. e. one not belonging to their affembly) has authority to prescribe a form of worship for them. For in this case it may eafily happen that foreign authority may forbid them to worship God in the way they think right, and oblige them to follow a rule which they believe to be difpleasing 396 Of SCHISM and HERESY.

pleasing to God. It is very easy, by putting proper cases, to convince every man in the world of the truth of this observa-Suppose, that in the days of Oliver Cromwell, the whole parish of St. Mary le Bow had unanimously believed, that the form of worship prescribed in the Liturgy of the church of England was the best, and the most acceptable to God: Would they not then have had an unalienable right to use it? If any man, or any number of men, that did not belong to that congregation, had probibited them the use of the Common-prayer, and, against their unanimous consent, had forced upon them the Presbyterian directory; that congregation would have been deprived of its natural right, and would have been forced, by a power foreign to it felf, to worship God in fuch a manner as they universally disapproved, and thought to be finful. What if a large presbytery thought the directory best? they could only judge for themselves. Still the people of Bow-church, who were to join in the public worship, were bound in conscience to join only in such worship as they thought was most agreeable to the will of God. But they could not act thus conscientiously, if any out of their own body, whether presbyters, bishops, protectors, or kings, had a right to appoint a form of worship for them. It will be eafily

Of SCHISM and HERESY. 397 easily allow'd, I presume, that this parish had a right of independency in the days of Cromwell, and that no one could then have a right to take away their Liturgy from them. From hence it will follow, that if a congregation does fincerely believe that another method of worship is more conformable to the will of God, and more acceptable to him, than that prefcribed in the Liturgy; fuch a congregation has an unalienable right to lay afide the Liturgy, and to use their own form. distinct congregations cannot rightfully unite under one government; fince if they should, they would give up their own right to worship God in a way which they judge most acceptable to him; and would invest a foreign power with an authority to oblige them to profess what they believe to be false, and to do what they believe to be finful in the worship of God. Suppose there are two congregations in London, one of which would use no creed but that called the Apostles, and the other would use the Popish creed of Pius V. they cannot unite under one government: fince in that case the Pope's creed would be taken from the one, or else be imposed upon both, contrary to the opinion of the majority in each congregation. If three congregations are united under one presbytery, and the majority of the three congregations are to choose

a creed and a form of worship for the whole body; the absurd consequence would be, that two of the congregations being able to out-vote the third, might pin down upon the third, a creed and mode of worship which the majority, or even all of the faid congregation believes to be false and displeasing to God. It is evident then, that every congregation has a natural and unalienable right of being independent on all other congregations, and all other men whatsoever. The majority of the congregation must determine what form of worship they will use: and if the rest cannot think it lawful to join in that worship, they must be allow'd a liberty to withdraw, and to worship God in a way which their consciences can approve.

The reasoning now mention'd, holds God in all ages, and in all countries alike. And, through the goodness of God, the government of these kingdoms has admitted the rule to be true, in that they have granted a toleration to all Protestant-dissenting congregations to choose for themselves the form of their own worship. I wish all foreign governments had the grace to follow this excellent example!

The destroying the independency of congregations has been the parent of the greatest part of the beresies or sects, that have been in the church. For those that acqui-

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Of SCHISM and HERESY. 399 red authority over several congregations, have always labour'd to unite them in fomething merely human and unscriptural. And this union in things unscriptural, has form'd a beresy or sect, and given it its denomination; fuch as Arminian, Calvinist, &c. Whereas, if all congregations were absolutely left to themselves, to worship God in the way they believe to be most acceptable to him, and most conformable to his word, it is most likely they would all agree, and there could not well be any fects or berefies. Especially would this have been fo, if the independency of congregations had been preserved from the beginning, and a number of them had never been united under one government, and been by custom and education, attach'd to human compositions, and prejudiced in their favour.

It now appears, that the beretic mention'd and condemn'd in scripture, is a sectary, who raises, or joins with, a faction in the church; that the cause of beresies and sects in the church, is mens not conforming their worship to the rules of the gospel, but practising according to the inventions and commandments of men; and that the rule of determining who is a beretic, and what is beresy, is but one, equally sitted to all places, and all times. And thus it must necessarily be. If any one shall say otherwise.

wife, and maintain, that one church has a right to introduce her own inventions into her worship, and that all others have not. he must excuse me if I think that his understanding is very weak, or his faith of the will very frong. He that shall fay, The church of England has a right to require subscription and conformity to her Articles and Liturgy, and yet the church of Scotland has not a right to require fubscription and conformity to her confession of faith and directory, must inwardly know himself to be a -- person not fit to be believed or disputed with. And he that shall say, The church of Scotland, the church of Holland, or the church of Geneva has a right to require subscription and conformity; but the church of Engtand has not, is equally contemptible. Either all of them have a right, or else no To suppose that all established one has. churches in the world have a right to impose their respective Creeds or Liturgies, is down-right Hobbism, or atheism. For if this were fo, there would be no fuch thing as a difference between good and evil, truth and falshood, right and wrong. If one church establishes good and truth, and the other has a right to establish the contrary, evil and falshood, the immediate confequence will be, that there is no fuch thing as morality, there is no difference between good

Of SCHISM and HERESY. 401 good and evil, no moral perfections in the Deity; and fo no God. To prevent running into down-right atheism therefore, it is necessary to say, that no church has a right to impose any unscriptural creed, or uninstituted modes of worship. If all such doctrines and commands of men were every where laid aside, there would be a beauteous uniformity throughout all the churches of Christ, which can never be ex-

pected in any other way.

It must be added, that it often happens, that they who pretend to have authority in the church of Christ, are not themselves at all members of the church. Faith in Christ is necessary to mens being admitted into the church, Acts, 11.41,42. VIII. 12,37. It must then be equally necessary to their continuing members of it, Acts, xv1. 5. The churches were established in the faith; and would have ceas'd to be churches of Christ, if they had ceas'd to believe. Accordingly the apostle says; Many deceivers are enter'd into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the stesh who deny the real incarnation of the divine Logos.] - Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, bath not God [and fo ceafeth to belong to the kingdomand church of God.] He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, be hath both the Father and the Son [and so continues to be

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a member of the church.] If there come any [preachers of religion] to you, and bring not this doctrine [viz. That Jesus Christ is come in the sless:] receive him not into your house, neither bid him, God speed, i. e. do not wish him success in his preaching, since he denies the fundamental doctrine of the real incarnation of the

Son of God, 2 John, ver. 7, 9, 10.

Actual obedience to the holy rules of the gospel, is altogether as necessary as faith, in all the adult, to their being members of the Christian church. The apostle says, The church is subject to Christ, Ephes. v. 24. From whence it immediately and evidently follows, that that man who is not really subject, and actually obedient to the will and laws of Christ, is not a member of the church of Christ. The apostle adds; Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that be might fanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any fuch thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish. The Lord nourisheth and cherisheth the church [which he could not do, if it were not obedient to him.] For we [who belong to the church of Christ are members of his body: [we are part] of his flesh, and [we are some] of his bones, Ephes. v. 25-30. The church 15

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Of SCHISM and HERESY. 403 is faid to be in God, and in Christ, I Thess. I. I. But if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, 2 Cor. v. 17. Answerably, Christians are called faints, and churches of faints, I Cor. 1. 2. XIV. 33. And when the apostle knew there was one wicked man among the Christians at Corinth, he order'd them immediately to cast bim out of the church, that the church might be a pure and boly fociety, I Cor. v. 2,7-13. Our Saviour also has ordain'd, that when a wicked man has been reproved, and will not hearken to the church, and amend, the members of the church must look upon him, and treat him as a Heathen, and a publican, Matt. xvIII. 17. Such a one then is no longer a member of the Christian church, and ought not to be received to Christian communion any more than an unbelieving Heathen, or unrighteous publican.

From hence we learn, that as wicked men are not members of the church, they can have no authority in it. Yet, in some churches, authority is lodged in the hands of most notorious sinners. The Popish historians tell us, that many of their Popes have been the greatest monsters of mankind, for all sorts of the most abominable wickedness. Yet, at the same time, each of these horrid sinners has been esteem'd and reverenced as the head of the church; Dd 2 and,

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and, by the far greatest part of the Papists, been look'd upon as a divine oracle, and an infallible judge in all points of religion. Surely it can be nothing less than blasphemy to fay, that fuch an unchristian monster of wickedness is the head of Christ's church, the vicar of Christ, the pastor of his sheep; when he is really a destroyer of the flock, an enemy of Christ, no member of the church, but a child of the Devil. It has been of infinite ill consequence to the Christian church, for mankind to have entertain'd a notion, that all they are members of the church, who profess to believe the doctrines which the church teaches. When they apostatise from the practice of piety and virtue, they immediately cease to be Christians. Let them be called pastors, elders, bishops, metrapolitans, or popes, it is all one if they are known, and proved to be wicked men, they ought to be degraded and excommunicated, and look'd upon as worse than infidels. and only reason why they are not dealt with in this manner, is, because they have worked themselves into so great a degree of authority and influence, as that the church, that is, the Christian laity, cannot cast them out. All this is originally owing to Christians departing from the primitive constitution of independent churches, and to their allowing one man, or a presbytery,

tery, or a council of priests to have authority over several congregations. For when they have gotten this unchristian authority into their hands, they are too strong to be controlled and managed by any congregation of Christians, and easily defy the pious laity to set them aside, how profane and atheistical soever they choose openly to be. But, as I said, such wicked men are not pastors or overseers of the Christian church, nor so much as members of it. They truly belong to the synagogue of Satan.

Before I conclude, it will be necessary to add, that though berely does not, in scripture, fignify false doctrines; yet there are such things as false doctrines, and as fundamental and damnable errors too; and there are truths which it is necessary to a man's falvation for him fincerely to believe; as is evident from the following texts, viz. Father - this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent, John, xvII. I, 3. Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth [the gospel which ye, my inspired apostles preach] and is baptised, shall be saved: but he that believeth not [this gospel as preached by you, my inspired apostles] shall be damned, Mark, XVI. 15, 16. If ye believe not that I am [i. e. that I am the Christ, Luke, xx1. 8. Dd 3 com-

compare Matt. XXIV. 5. John, IV. 25, 26.] ye shall die in your sins, John, vIII. 24. Whosoever really believes that Jesus is the Christ, does necessarily believe all that be can find Jesus has taught; and think himfelf obliged to do all that he can find Jesus has required bim to do. He that impartially examines, whether Jesus be the Christ or not, will necessarily find him to be the Christ. And he that fincerely seeks after the mind and will of Christ will not be permitted to fall into any pernicious error, as Christ has promis'd; If any man will do God's will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of my felf, John, vII. 17. While a man is thus truly impartial, and fincerely devoted to the will of God, while he receives Jesus as the Messiah, the Teacher, and Lord of the church, and fincerely feeks after his mind and will, no errors of judgment can condemn him, as the apostle has expresly taught us, in that very beautiful parable, I Cor. 111. 10 - 15. The literal meaning of it is this, viz. Upon the same solid foundation two men build. One builds his house of gold, filver, precious stones, and other fuch incombustible materials: the other makes his house of wood, bay, and stubble, which easily take fire. Each man lodges in his respective house. At the same time a person comes, and applies

Of SCHISM and HERESY. 407 a lighted torch to the walls of each house. He that lodges in the house made of gold, filver, and precious stones, lies secure; for his house will not take fire. The other takes fire immediately, and is foon burnt to the ground: and the builder of it suffers the loss of his house; yet he himself is preferved, by running through the flames The application is, that the foundation of Christianity is, that Jesus is the Christ. If a preacher holds this foundation, and preaches nothing but truth, that will bear the test, he shall receive a reward from God. if he holding the foundation, preaches errors, his doctrines shall be condemn'd: but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire, i. e. with difficulty and danger, as a man that runs through the flames in order to fave his life. This sense of δια συρω, is confirmed by comparing 1 Cor. x. 1. Matt. v11. 13. X11. 43. X1X.24. Heb. XI. 29.

These things do not leave a man at liberty to believe and teach what he will: but he is bound in conscience to search with impartiality, diligence, and care after the doctrines and commands of Christ: and whatever he finds to be such, he is bound to receive, profess, and obey. And in the nature of things, it is impossible that any man, or body of men, should have any authority to forbid this profession and obe-

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dience. If, indeed, any man shall prefume, under a cloak of religion, to preach high treason and rebellion; if he shall teach that the bishop of Rome, or any other bishop has authority over the king and parliament, that man ought to be punish'd as a traytor to his king and country. But when a man preaches nothing inconsistent with the safety and welfare of the state, he has an undoubted right to preach what he sincerely believes (after an impartial examination) to be the truth of the gospel: and whoever forbids him, will be found fighting against God.

DISCOURSE X.

Of the future Restoration of the Jews.

HAT the Jews, both the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and the other ten, shall hereafter be restored to their own land, is foretold by all the ancient prophets. The twelve tribes of I/rael continued one people till the reign of Reboboam, fon of Solomon; when ten tribes revolted from him. These ten tribes were called, The kingdom of Ifrael: the other two were called, The kingdom of Judah. About two hundred and fifty years after the division, the kingdom of Israel was conquer'd by the Assyrians, and the people carried away captive, 2 Kings, xvII. 5, 6, &c. These have never yet returned to Judea. Seventy years after the birth of Christ, the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, were by the Romans conquer'd and banish'd from their own land, and have not yet been permitted to return. But

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But the time will come, when they shall return, and quietly possess their own land, even to the end of the world. The plainest prophely of this was written by Ezekiel, Chap. XXXVII. 21, &c. where God fays, " I will take the children of Israel " from among the Heathen -and bring " them into their own land: and I will " make them one nation in the land___ " and one king shall be king to them all: " and they shall be no more two nations, " neither shall they be divided into two " kingdoms any more at all: neither shall " they defile themselves any more. -" And they shall dwell in the land,-" they, and their children, and their chil-" drens children, for ever; and my fer-" vant David shall be their prince for ever .- And I will place them, and " multiply them, and will fet my fanctu-" ary in the midst of them for evermore." It is very evident, that this prediction has not been yet fulfilled: fince the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah have not been united hitherto, ever fince their division under Rehoboam. But they must become one kingdom, and be fettled peaceably in their own land, to the end of the world.

Of this same future restoration of the Jews, it seems most natural to interpret the last chapter of the prophesy of Joel.

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In the preceding verses, Chap. 11. 28-32. we have a prophefy of the pouring out of the spirit, which was fulfilled at the famous pentecoste, immediately succeeding our Saviour's ascension into heaven, Acts, 11. 1-21. The next event foretold by Joel, is most likely to be one that was to happen after that effusion of the spirit. He foretels God's bringing again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, Chap. 111. 1. which appears to be the same restoration as that foretold by Ezekiel. Agreeably to this, God says, ver. 17, 20. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Zion my boly mountain; then shall Jerusalem be boly, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more. - Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation, i. e. plainly, as in Ezekiel, in all generations, even to the end of the world.

It has been said, I know, that this prophesy was sulfilled in the time of Hezekiah. And yet it is certain, that in his days there was no captivity of Judah and Jerusalem brought back; because none were then in captivity: though Joel speaks of this. It is true, that Sennacherib, king of Assyria, came up against Jerusalem with a great army, in the reign of Hezekiah; but he was forced to retreat without taking it.

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But, at the same time, it is to be observed, that the prophet Isaiab told Hezekiab of Babylonish captivity, (2 Kings, xx. 17, 18.) which happen'd about one hundred and twenty years after. Can it now be thought, that foel could speak of that time when he faid, There shall no strangers pass through Jerusalem any more; when there were strangers, the Babylonians, to pass through it in one hundred and twenty years time, and other strangers, even the Romans, to destroy it again about fix hundred and fixty years after that; and when strangers were to continue to pass through and possess it (as they have now actually done) for almost seventeen hundred years? Was this fulfilling the prophefy of Joel, that Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation? Can one hundred and twenty years be called for ever? Does the expression, from generation to generation, fignify only for five generations? It is far more natural to interpret the prophet Joel as speaking of the yet future restoration of the Jews, after which it will be most strictly true, that they shall dwell in their own land from generation to generation, for ever, even till the end of the world, and no strangers shall pass through Jerusalem any more.

In defence of the other interpretation it has been faid, that " the Hebrew word " לעולם doth not strictly fignify what " we mean by the words for ever; but " oftentimes denotes any continued dura-" tion. Thus it is said of the servant that " would not accept his freedom, that " he should serve his master for ever, i. e. " to the year of jubile." Of this opinion were Jerom (on Gal. 1. 4.) Grotius, Patrick, &c. But we must not be misled by great names. If we confult the text it felf, it will be evident, even to a demonfration, that this cannot be the meaning of the expression. The law, Exod. XXI. 2-6. is, If thou buy a Hebrew flave, be shall serve thee fix years, and in the seventh, be shall go out free for nothing. he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself. And if the slave shall say, I love my master, my wife, and my children, I will not go out free: then his master shall bring him to the judges: he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door-post: and bis master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for ever. The flave

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flave here mention'd, was an Israelite. that was fold for a flave as a punishment for his crimes, according to the rule laid down in the next chapter, ver. 3. The thief shall make full restitution: if he have nothing, then he shall be fold for his theft, that so the price given for him may make some restitution. And it appears to have been a custom among the Jews, to sell an insolvent debtor, together with his wife and children (if he had any) into flavery to some of their own nation, that the price might pay, at least, part of the debt, 2 Kings, IV. I. Matt. XVIII. 25. When any fuch person was sold as a slave to an Israelite, his master could not force him to tarry in his service more than fix In the seventh year, the Hebrew flave was to be released, unless he voluntarily chose to continue with his master: in which case he was to remain his slave for ever, that is, as long as they two lived. He had no manner of concern with the next jubile: and the supposing that he would then be fet free, is almost as strange a supposition as was ever made by learned This will eafily appear by putting a particular case or two.

Suppose a Hebrew thief had been sold the very next day after the end of a jubile, and when he had served one year, his ma-

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ster gave him a wife, who brought him four or five children before the fix years of his fervitude were expired: suppose that his love to his mafter, as well as to his own wife and children, ingaged him rather to choose to continue in his master's service, than to leave his wife and children: and suppose that when the law fays, that in this case, he should be obliged to ferve his mafter for ever, we should interpret it, that he should serve till the next jubile: the rule would then be represented to be, that if he would not leave his master when he was (suppose) five and twenty, or thirty years of age, he should be obliged to live with him only till he should be fixty nine, or seventy four years old; and then at the jubile (which was always fifty years after the preceding) he should be releas'd, and be his own master, ever after, as long as he lived. But, confidering the vast odds there was against his living to so great an age; such a rule would look more like a banter. than any promise of a privilege and favour. And still it would be worse if the man mention'd in this case was forty or fifty, when first sold for a slave, and there were yet fifty years to the jubile.

Put another case, that the thief was sold for a slave eight years before a jubile: at

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fix years end, when he might be releafed if he would, he refuses it, because he defires to live with his wife and children: whereupon the law binds him to live with his master for ever. If this be interpreted to mean only till the next jubile; then the fense of the law will be represented to be this; " Though the man's love to his wife " and children is allow'd to ingage him " not to accept his freedom at the end of " the fixth year of his servitude; yet, in " the eighth year, he shall be made free, " and be forced to go away from his wife " and children (who are his master's pro-" perty) whether he will or no." I fay, whether he will or no; because in the law about the jubile, there is no provision made for a man's choofing to continue in the now mention'd state of servitude. How does this interpretation account for the reason of the law? The reason why the Hebrew slave was allow'd, at the end of fix years, to choose to continue with his master for ever, was, because he loved his wife and children, and master. Would not the same reason hold good, not only two years longer to the next jubile, but even for life? Would he not choose to serve his master for ever, that fo he might never be parted from his wife and children till death? How otherwife wife could the design of the law be ac-

complished?

Put a third case, that the slave was fold three years before the beginning of the jubile: according to the interpretation which I am opposing, what must be done with the flave at the jubile? If he was then released by the law of the jubile, how could he be bound (as the other law expresly says he was) to serve his master fix years, and not to go out free till the seventh year? Could there be such inconfistency between two divine laws? There could not: and therefore it is demonstrated that the case of a Hebrew slave, mention'd Exod. xx1. 1-6. above quoted, has no manner of relation to the jubile.

The design of God's appointing every sisteth year to be a year of jubile and release, was, that every man might return to his possession (which he could never sell for a longer time, than till the next jubile) and to his family, Lev. xxv. 10, 14, 15, 16, 23, 24. The servant who was to be set free at the jubile, that he might return to his family and possession, was not, in the least, of the same kind with the slave before mention'd, as will evidently appear from the account given of him, Lev. xxv. 39, &c. If thy brother

that dwelleth by thee, be waxen poor, and be sold [i. e. sell himself, compare ver. 47.] unto thee, thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond servant; but as an hired servant, and as a sojourner be shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of jubile: and then shall be depart from thee, both he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall be return. The differences between this law and that before cited, are many, great, and obvious. The former spoke of a flave; this, of one that was not to be made a flave: the former related to one that was fold for his crimes; this, to one that was merely grown poor, which was no crime: the term of servitude appointed by the former law, was always, invariably, fix years; the term appointed by the latter was, till the next jubile, which might be any number of years from one to fifty: the defign of the former law, in ordaining that the thief should be made a slave for fix years, was, that hereby he might be punished for his wickedness, and that the money given for him might make some restitution, at least, to the person he had injured; but the design of the latter law, in ordaining that the poor man should be received as a covenant fervant, into an IfraelIsraelitish family was (not to punish him, but) that he might be supported and maintained by others, when he could no longer maintain himself: the design of the former law in giving the flave his option, at the fix years end, either to leave his master, or to choose to live with him for ever, could not possibly be, that he should return to his own family, and to the possession of his fathers, for as long as he lived in flavery with his master, he could not do this; but the design of the other law in giving the poor covenantfervant his liberty at the next jubile was, that he might return to his family, and injoy his paternal estate again: whereas, from this comparison it appears, that the flave who was fold for his theft, was quite cut off from all right to his paternal estate, by means of his crime, and therefore was allow'd, if he choic it, to live with his master for ever. Since then these two laws are thus intirely distinct, and have no manner of relation to one another, it follows, that there is no necesfity that the expression for ever, in the former of them, should be interpreted to fignify the same as to the next jubile in the other.

Nay, these two expressions are so far from signifying the same thing, that they

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are expresty distinguish'd from, and set in direct opposition to one another, Levit. XXV. 33, 34. If a man purchase of the Levites, then the house that was sold, and the city of his possession [or rather, as it is in the Greek, conformably to the preceding verse, and to the following clause, the house of the city of his possession | shall go out in the year of jubile. For the houses of the cities of the Levites are their possession among the children of Israel. But the field of the suburbs of their cities may not be fold: for it is their perpetual possession, or their possession for ever, i. e. not only to the next jubile, but also in all future ages.

It may be added, that it is contrary to nature, and to the genius of all languages to make for ever, fignify any known, limited, determinate period of time. It always does, and always must fignify a duration that is unknown and uncertain among men, such as the duration of the world, of a man's life, of a particular relation between two persons, &c. Thus, when the Psalmist says, Christ's throne shall be established for ever as the moon, he means, to the end of the world, Psalm, LXXXIX. 37. David shall be my servant for ever, i. e. as long as he lives, I Sam. XXVII. 12. Q Rehoboam, the people will be

thy fervants for ever, i.e. as long as thou livelt, or as long as the relation of king and people subsists between you and them,

1 Kings, XII. 7.

It has been pleaded by a learned writer, that " God fays of the land of Judah, " that it should be desolate, and an hissing " for ever, i. e. till the seventy years cap-" tivity was expired." He has not nam'd the place; but I suspect he refers to Fer. xvIII. 15, 16. My people (faith God) hath forgotten me, they have burnt incense to vanity [i.e. to idols] and they [the idols] have caused them [my people] to stumble in their ways, from the ancient paths, --to make their land desolate, and a perpetual hiffing: every one that passeth thereby shall be astonish'd, and wag his head. The plain meaning of this passage is, that the idolatry of the people of Judah tended to make their land a perpetual histing, or a hissing in all future ages of the world; as it provoked God to give them up to this perpetual evil. But still God faid in the same discourse, ver. 7, 8. At what instant I speak concerning a nation. and concerning a kingdom to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it : if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. In the immediately

ately following part of the chapter, this general confideration is particularly applied to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and God tells them, that their idolatry tended to provoke him to resolve upon making them and their land, a defolation and a hiffing for ever: but still, if they would repent of their fins, he would not make them defolate for ever. However, at the same time, God saw it necessary to send them into captivity for seventy years, in Babylon. So that to be made desolate for ever, and, to be made defolate for seventy years, appear rather to be fet in opposition or contrast to one another, as the nature of language requires they should be. The like distinction and oppofition may be observed in another place of the same prophet, Jer. xxv. 9—12, 18. Behold I will send, and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my fervant, and will bring them against this land [viz. Judea] and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these [Heathen] nations round about [Judea] and will utterly destroy them [i. e. those Heathen nations, but not Judea] and make them an astonishment, and a bissing, and perpetual desolations .- And this whole land [Judea] shall be a defolation, and an astonishment. And thele

these [Heathen] nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years [i.e. to the end of the Babylonian monarchy.] And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation [Babylon] for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. ___ Jerufalem and the cities of Judah, and the kings thereof, and the princes thereof, to make them a desolation, an aftonishment, a hisfing, and a curse, as it is this day. Other nations were to be made a perpetual desolation; but no fuch thing is faid of Judea: this was to be made defolate, at that time, only for seventy years. Agreeably to this, God faith, Jer. xxx. 11. Though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee: yet will I not make a full end of thee, O Jacob. Chap. XLVI. 28. Hazor shall be a desolation for ever, Ch. XLIX. 33. But no fuch thing is faid of Judea; nor could it be; fince all the prophets have foretold, that the Israelites shall yet be restored to their own land, and dwell therein for ever.

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